REPORT

ON THE

CONDITION OF THE SONTHALS

IN THE DISTRICTS OF

BIRBHUM, BANKURA, MIDNAPORE AND NORTH BALASORE.



By

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PART I

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

I HAVE the honour to submit my report on the condition of the Sonthals in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore and Balasore.

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2 *Staff.*—Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin, Sub-Deputy Collector, and Maulvi Ekramuddin, Kanungo, were deputed to assist in the enquiry. The former joined on the 16th and the latter on the 6th December 1908. Maulvi Ekramuddin's work was of great assistance. The Assistant Settlement Officer, Babu Rampada Chatarji, Deputy Collector, prepared a valuable report on the areas under settlement in Nayabasan, Midnapore. I took over charge on the 27th November 1908 and gave over charge on the 3rd May 1909.

3 *Tour*—Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin made independent enquiries in the thanas of the Sadar subdivision of Birbhum, in the eastern portion of the Sadar subdivision of Bankura, viz, in Onda, Simlapal and the portion of Raipur thana east of the Kossye river, and also in thanas Garhbeta and Salbani, in Midnapore. Maulvi Ekramuddin made enquiries in the northern and western portions of the Sadar subdivision of Bankura, and the western portions of Binpur and Jhargram thanas in Midnapore and in Balasore. He also made a separate enquiry into the condition of the Bhumij Ghatwals in Khatra thana in Bankura I toured in the Rampur Hât subdivision of Birbhum and the outlying outpost of Suri, Mohammad Bazar, then down the centre of the Sadar subdivision of Bankura, and through Binpur, Jhargram, Gopiballabpur and Nayagram thanas in Midnapore into Jellasore thana in Balasore. With the exception of the period set aside for the report, the whole time was spent in what was, owing to the large area under enquiry, a rapid tour through each area to discover the peculiarities of each portion of it. No area was twice covered, except Khatra where the enquiry relating to the Ghatwals mentioned above was made, and to a small extent Jellasore in Balasore.

4. *Origin of the Enquiry.*—From two sources, Birbhum and Midnapore, there had come simultaneously two appeals to help the Sonthals The grievances in Birbhum are of long standing and date back to 1872, when an enquiry was made into the condition of the Sonthals by Mr. T. T Allen, who was then Magistrate Whilst the same discontent led in the Sonthal Parganas to the passing of Regulation III of 1872, which made vast changes in the administration of that district, and laid down the lines of the policy on which it has ever since been conducted, it led to nothing in Birbhum on the boundary. In 1881, however, an attempt was made to re-introduce the Mostagiri or headman system, and to reduce the rents by a measurement of lands and a compromise between the landlords and tenants* In 1892, a regular settlement was effected of the Mollarpur Estate † The fact, however, that on the other side of the border, in the Sonthal Parganas, the Sonthal is secure from enhancement of rents except by order of a Revenue officer, and also from dispossession by the *mahajan* (money-lender), has served to accentuate the grievances of the Sonthals in Birbhum, and to impel them, under the leadership of Durga Manjhi, to approach Government now with a request for a settlement, and for the introduction of the Sonthal Parganas laws amongst them. For the last two or three years the Sonthals in Rampur Hât subdivision have been petitioning Government to redress these grievances, which are in the main grievances against the *mahajan* or zamindar who have taken their lands or raised their rents. Mr Foster, as Collector of Birbhum, enquired into the matter and submitted a report on it to Government in 1907. Some agrarian disturbance was then apprehended, and Mr. Foster was of opinion that the matter called for vigorous action. Meanwhile, in 1906, the question of the loss by the Sonthals of their lands and other matters had been raised by some Sonthals in Midnapore, who petitioned Government through the Revd A. L Kennan. On this petition the Collector, Mr Weston, recommended that the provisions of section 10(*a*) and 10(*b*) of the (Old) Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act should be

† Munshi Nundji's settlement   * Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement.

extended to Midnapore. The Commissioner, Mr. E. H. C. Walsh, agreed, but observed that this matter ought to be taken up and legislation introduced for the whole Province. The other Commissioners were then consulted.

Later Mr. Maddox, then Commissioner of Burdwan, had an enquiry made into the loss of the lands and the indebtedness of Sonthals in Rampur Hât subdivision. This enquiry was tested, and the results were submitted to Government with Mr. Maddox's recommendation that a special officer should be appointed to enquire into the whole question in the Burdwan Division.

The suggestion was adopted, and a Committee was appointed to consider the terms of the reference.

5. *Terms of the Reference*—These are as follows:—

The enquiry should be limited to Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore, and permanently-settled parts of Balasore, north of the Subarnarekha, if these were not done in the Orissa settlement.

The objects of the enquiry should be—

(1) To ascertain in thanas shown to contain a large Sonthal population, what number of villages contain a population which is nearly homogeneous.

(2) In such villages how far does the Sonthal headman system still subsist?

(3) To ascertain the rate of mutation from Sonthals to non-Sonthals both in such villages, and on the outer fringe of less homogeneous villages, taking a selected number of villages. A complete and exhaustive examination of the facts of every raiyat in a small number of typical villages in each area of a distinctive character is to be preferred to the accumulation of general information. An examination will have to be made of the extent to which Sonthali lands have been transferred in the last twenty years or so, how far the transfers have been occasioned by rent decrees, and how far by mortgage or by private sale, and what is the state of indebtedness at present.

(4) To examine transfers in consequence of civil decree, and to ascertain to what extent the proceedings are *ex-parte*. The examination of Civil Court proceedings may be on the lines of Maulvi Ekramuddin's.

(5) To examine how far arbitrary eviction by landlords is prevalent.

(6) To examine the effect on the Sonthal headman system of subinfeudation by the zamindar, and whether tenure-holders are more oppressive than landlords.

(7) Comparison of past and present rent-rolls. There have been several local settlements in past years, certainly two in Birbhum, those of Munshi Nundji and Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, and possibly others. The facts then recorded to be compared with existing facts. A reference to the settlement proceedings of the Nayabasan and Jhargram Estates now going on will give valuable information.

(8) Is the condition of the Sonthal population in these areas to any extent better than in adjoining unsettled areas? In fact, have these settlements produced any effect?

(9) The examination of old Road Cess papers might assist to a conclusion.*

(10) The state of education, liquor traffic and the possibility of co-operative banks may be incidentally considered.

(11) General feeling of the Sonthals towards the alien raiyats and their zamindars to be examined. Has their feeling any political importance?

(12) To consider whether any legislation should be proposed, taking into account the provisions in restraint of transfer in other Acts—Bengal and Foreign, *e.g.*, Sonthal Parganas Regulation, new Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, and Punjab and Bombay Acts (Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act).

* These were not available in the District offices of Birbhum and Bankura, and were only occasionally produced by the landlords.

(13) To examine whether in the same areas there are other aboriginal or semi-aboriginal races whose position is similar to that of the Sonthals.

(14) To indicate the thanas or estates which should be covered by any settlement operations, and submit a draft programme in consultation with Director of Land Records.

(15) The effect of the increased demand for labour in mines, etc., on the Sonthal population economically and socially should be considered.

6. *Area under Enquiry.*—The tour mentioned in paragraph 3 was designed so as to cover the area under enquiry, which, relying on the first clause of the terms of reference, I restricted to thanas shown to contain a large Sonthal population.

These are the following —

District	Subdivision.	Thana.	Population.	Sonthal population	Percentage.	Bhumij population	Percentage
Birbhum	Rampur Hât	Murarai ...	86,182	3,108	3 6	...	...
		Nalhati .	83,521	4,110	4·9	...	
		Rampur Hât ...	102,810	8,220	8 0	...	
		Maureswar ...	93,839	6,791	7 2	...	...
	Sadar ...	Suri ...	140,033	12,195	8 7		.
		Bolpur ...	115,849	8,781	7·6	...	..
Bankura.	Sadar .	Bankura ...	148,870	15,373	10·3	...	...
		Gangajalghati	122,399	7,709	6 3	..	..
		Onda .	122,917	12,232	9 9	.	...
		Raipur ...	101,345	35,166	34·7	5,480	5 4
		Simlapal ...	38,109	8,765	22 9	...	...
		Khatra ...	115,313	19,899	17 3	11,440	9 9
Midnapore	Sadar ..	Binpur .	104,982	36,752	35 007	7,104	6 8
		Garhbeta ...	133,122	26,187	19·7	...	...
		Salbani ...	60,850	11,872	19 5	4,003	6 6
		Jhargram ..	76,063	19,284	25·4	4,304	5 7
		Gopiballabhpur	163,156	32,405	19 9	19,220	11 8
Balasore	Sadar ...	Jellasore ...	59,721	6,099	10·2	.	.

There are small settlements in Dubrajpur thana in Birbhum, in the Bishnupur Subdivision in Bankura, and some large ones* in the central thanas of Midnapore spreading out from the very large settlement in the west These have not come directly under enquiry, with the exception of Dubrajpur.

* For comparison the numbers are given below —

	Thana	Population	Sonthal population
Birbhum ..	Labpur .	64,281	1,254
	Dubrajpur ...	138,026	2,304
	Sakulipur	77,740	468
Bankura .	Barjora ...	68,012	311
	Bishnupur ..	142,873	2,970
	Kotalpur ...	96,652	490
	Indas	83,343	351
	Sonamukhi ...	82,468	425
Midnapore .	Kharagpur ...	111,016	6,760
	Midnapore . .	78,321	4,599
	Debra	67,872	2,225
	Keshpur	86,680	2,257
	Narayangarh ..	118 441	2,920
	Dantan	123,641	1,592
	Sabang, Ghatal, Chandrakona, etc		1,398

The total Sonthal and Bhumij population of the different districts is shown below —

	Population	Sonthal population.	Bhumij population
Birbhum	902,280	47,221	*
Bankura	1,116,411	105,682	19,785
Midnapore	2,789,114	148,251	44,233
Balasore	1,071,197	8,856	4,279

The whole of the area under enquiry (including the small portion of Burdwan excluded from the enquiry) consists of a belt of irregular thickness stretching from the large Sonthal area of the Sonthal Parganas to another thickly populated Sonthal area in the Native State of Mourbhanj,* between Bengal proper on the east and the Dravidian area of Chota Nagpur on the west, where the Sonthal settlements are dovetailed amongst and finally get lost in those of the Hos, Bhumijes, Mundas and other tribes of that plateau. In population the area presents the meeting place of the aborigine and the Aryan; the latter being the later arrival.

The Sonthals cannot be regarded as immigrants more than any one else. They certainly are immigrants, but then so are the Aryans, and in that the Sonthals or Bhumijes have been the clearers of the jungle and the pioneers of the cultivation of the larger portion of the area, they have a better claim to be considered the original inhabitants of the area than the Aryans, except possibly than the zamindars and Rajas and their immediate followers, whose real ancestry is now shrouded in Rajput tradition As regards distribution of Sonthals, it may be noted that the portion of the area most densely populated with Sonthals is at the south-west† of Bankura and the north-west of Midnapore. In physical aspects the area presents the change from the plateau to the plains of Bengal in an undulating country, with patches of jungle here and there, which in Midnapore become larger and are more carefully protected. In the 18th century, a considerable portion of the area under enquiry appears to have formed part of an indefinite administrative unit called the Jungle Mahals lying between Chota Nagpur and the plains of Bengal. This was subsequently defined as being composed of certain parganas in Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore; but on account of the disturbances of the Bhumijes, it was split up amongst the neighbouring districts in 1833. The name of Jungle Mahals, however, still survives in a portion of the Maureswar thana in Birbhum, and in the whole of the western area of Midnapore The fact that there was once an administrative unit roughly corresponding to this area, and the fact that this area contains the largest population of Sonthals outside the Sonthal Parganas and outside Chota Nagpur are not accidents, but are due to the physical aspects of the area which appears to stamp it as belonging to the non-regulation portion of the Province. I have, however, no intention of proving that this area, with the exception of that in Birbhum, ought to be retransferred to the non-regulation divisions which it borders—though this would be the proper procedure to adopt if it were not otherwise rather impracticable—but of trying to show that some of the laws of the regulation districts are not suited to at least one considerable portion of their population.

7. *Tribes under Enquiry.*—The enquiry relates to the Sonthals, but one of the terms of the reference is whether there are in the same area other races, aboriginal or semi-aboriginal, whose position is similar to that of the Sonthals. The principal of these tribes is the Bhumij, and for this reason the statistics for this race have been included in the last paragraph; other tribes will receive attention in the course of the report

8. *Method of Enquiry.*—Three forms were devised. The first was designed to show the different constituents of the population of a village, together with the history and a general description of the village. The second was devised to show the past and present area held by the raiyat, details of land lost, details of land acquired, and the past and present rent. The third form was framed to show the raiyat's present debts, rate of interest, how much repaid, how much due and how secured. A few general questions

* Sonthal account for 30 per cent of the population in Mourbhanj.
† This once formed part of Manbhum

were also drafted, supplemented from time to time by other instructions as further knowledge showed their necessity. Armed with the first form the enquiring officer on arrival at any spot, could record the particulars of a large number of villages from the collected Sonthals. Then one or two villages were selected, and a day or two devoted to filling up the second and third forms from information given by the Sonthals, testing the same when necessary by reference to the zamindar or *mahajans*. In this way details of each raiyat (or rather of a number of the raiyats, as it was often impossible to get them all together) of a large number of villages were obtained. Of these villages, a number have been selected as representative and printed in Appendix No. I. It is not claimed for these results that they are strictly accurate There was no time for going back for the attestation of the facts of each village, but when the officer had once enquired into a village he had to hurry on to another place. Consequently strict accuracy could not be obtained, but the details of each village are, roughly accurate.

It is thus evident that the main source of my information was the Sonthals. In one estate I reversed the procedure and took my information from the landlord, who was also a *mahajan*, first. The Sonthals became reticent, and my information was nearly valueless.

9. *Objects of the Enquiry.*—The objects of the enquiry were confined to the terms of the reference, which were more than comprehensive, considering the time at my disposal, the area under enquiry and the smallness of the staff. I have throughout eschewed all tales of illegal oppression of the Sonthal, which I could not verify. If every story of oppression had been verified, and this would have required a long residence in each area, doubtless I could have presented a much darker picture of his troubles.

10. *Arrangement of the Report*—A chapter has been devoted to each of the main terms of reference, and each chapter deals with every district separately. An attempt has been made to make the description of each district complete* in itself The result is necessarily a certain amount of repetition.

CHAPTER II.

SONTHAL VILLAGES

(Terms of Reference No. I.)

BIRBHUM

11 *Rampur Hât Subdivision* —The figures below show the relative density of the Sonthals in terms of population, and of villages in the Rampur Hât subdivision —

Villages	Population	Sonthal population	Total number of villages.	Total number of Sonthal villages
Murarai ..	86,182	3,108	260	35
Nalhati	82,521	4,110	265	44
Rampur Hât	102,810	8,220	307	80
Maureswar	93,839	6,891	426	44†

12. The figures for the population have been taken from the Census tables of 1901, and those for the villages from statistics carefully prepared in view of a settlement in this particular area. By a village is not meant a revenue mauza, but a village hamlet locally recognized as possessing a separate entity; and by a Sonthal village is meant such a village or hamlet containing a practically homogeneous Sonthal proportion.

13. A Sonthal village or hamlet is readily recognisable from a long way off by its clean, tidy, well swept and white-washed houses, sometimes relieved by a dado of bright colouring. Not only does this appearance distinguish it readily

* There is very little about Jhargram thana (Midnapore).

† Figures supplied by the Police for this thana.

from the Bengali village, but also the absence of trees, bamboos and tanks from round about the village site. The Sonthals live in *tolas* separate from the ordinary Bengali, whom they avoid as much as their avocations permit, but they live side by side with occasional Kamars, Muchis, Maryas, Dhangars, Kodas, Domes and Bhuiyas, here and there Dikkus are found in the same *tola*. The size of the village varies. Ordinarily it contains between six and twenty houses and should properly be called a hamlet, but in a number of cases, particularly in the south-west of Rampur Hât thana and in Maureswar, larger and more substantial villages occur.

14. Their age is not very great. In the majority of cases they were made by the grand-fathers of the present Sonthal. Such is the statement of the middle-aged and old Sonthals, whose fathers and grand-fathers are now dead. This places their origin about the middle of the first-half of last century. That this is not too recent a date, is borne out by the fact that Mr. Allen in 1872 found old Sonthals living there who remembered when the whole place was a mass of jungle, and the time when the Sonthals first cleared it. The Sonthals' own statement show that they are an off-shoot of the great Sonthal movement towards the Sonthal Parganas at the beginning of the last century. But the limit to the formation of the new villages had been practically reached by 1880, when Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha made his settlement of Sonthal villages. In only a very few cases have any villages been formed since then. Yet though the limit to the formation of fresh villages had been practically reached in 1880, the limit to the extension of cultivation had not been reached, but is still going on, and will still presumably go on despite the fact that the soil most capable of cultivation has now been brought under the plough.

15. The returns of 1872 show that the Sonthal population for the whole district was then only 6,954, it is now 47,221 according to the Census of 1901. This large apparent increase, omitting errors in calculation, in the population is due to the fact that the Sonthals are extraordinarily prolific, and owing to their out-door habits very hardy, as well as to the large increase in population in the Sonthal Parganas pressing the Sonthals eastwards But these figures do not represent the sum of the increase of the population in this area Many of them, particularly from the northern portion, have, owing to the pressure of the increasing population or to dispossession by *mahajans* or zamindars, either emigrated to the Barind, a *quasi*-laterite tract of country in Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Bogra, or else to Murshidabad, there to break fresh country, to clear the jungles, and to make new terraces of rice land, for doing which they possess the most extraordinary aptitude, even out of the most unpromising country.

16. According to Mr. Gait in his Census* report, "these wanderings of the Sonthals have hitherto been confined to a laterite soil" This fact is strikingly illustrated in this subdivision. The Sonthal villages border those in the Sonthal Parganas, and are situated in the narrow strip of broken high country west of the East Indian Railway, lying between the hills of the Sonthal Parganas which approach the Birbhum border on the one side, and the alluvial soil of the plains proper on the other. Where these hills recede from the border, as in the south-west of Murarai thana, there are practically no Sonthal villages. This strip of country is where Bengali and Sonthali cultivation meets. On the one side there is the Sonthal country; on the other there is the Bengali country. As such it is debateable land, and there are Bengali villages in it. But nevertheless there are considerable areas in it, in which the population is mainly Sonthal, and which, but for the accident of their being a more convenient centre of administration at Suri nearer than Dumka, and of their being portions of large parganas where the Bengali element predominated in other places, would possibly have been included in the Sonthal Parganas. In fact they were originally so included, but were subsequently excluded on these very grounds in 1857.† But what was true of these parganas as a whole, was not true of particular portions of these parganas. The Sonthals have cleared the jungles and made the lands of the villages of these portions, and as I have already stated, they have less cause to be

* Part I, page 139
† Government letter No. 1063, dated 14th February 1872

stamped as immigrants than the Bengalis, who, though in a few cases they may have had cultivation in these very areas before the Sonthals came, have taken advantage of the fact that the Sonthals had cleared the dreaded jungle, to come in and reap the fruits of the Sonthals' labour by oppression, extortion and cheating. These are strong words, but however exaggerated Mr. Allen's report on the condition of affairs in 1872 may have been, there can be little doubt that they were then justified. Now-a-days various measures have tempered the actions of the zamindars and *mahajans*, and the various malpractices that these words conjure up do not exist to such an extent, but the Sonthals are still the victims of sharp practice and greed.

17. The figures given above do not imply that the cultivation of every village is mainly Sonthal, and by no means that the best lands are Sonthal. In some cases, as in Karangdih, Dharampur and Debdattapur [*vide* Appendix I (*a*), Nos. III, VIII and X], practically all the lands have gone into the hands of Dikkus, who on account of its extent have given it out again *adhi* or on a temporary under-raiyati lease to the Sonthals. But this is not the ordinary rule; the lost cultivation generally passes away from the Sonthal altogether, with the result that in a few cases the village has been practically depopulated. Eight hamlets have been counted in which practically all the cultivation has passed into the hands of Sonthals, and five others in which the village has been quite or almost depopulated. The cultivation is still largely Sonthal in a majority of villages, but in the case of many of them this remark is very mis-leading, as the *mahajan* often takes the best lands and leaves the worst uplands which occupy a much larger area [*vide* Kusumkandor Appendix I(*a*), No. XVI.] He has no use for these until the Sonthal turns them into rice lands. Very few intact villages in which no Bengali has yet obtained any cultivation are still believed to exist. Experience has, however, shown that a detailed examination of such a village would reveal the presence of a *mahajan*.

18. The villages belong to a large number of different proprietors, patnidars, or tenure-holders, the only proprietor of a large number of villages is the Mohant of Mollarpur, in Maureswar.

19. *Sadar Subdivision.*—From the figures below it will appear that the only other thanas in which there are an appreciable number of Sonthals are Mohammad Bazar, Rajnagar and Bolpur, and of these Rajnagar is the most important —

THANAS	Population.	Sonthal population.	Number of villages	Number of Sonthal villages.
Muhammad Bazar (outpost)			182	28
Suri*	140,133	12,195	.	
Rajnagar (outpost) ...			168	68
Khyrasole (outpost) ...	138,025	2,304	325	6
Dubrajpur†			..	...
Imambazar (outpost) ...	115,894	8,78	97	3
Bolpur... ...			303	37

20. The villages in the Muhammad Bazar outpost or thana are arranged mainly in two groups, one in the north-west, and the other in the west next to the Sonthal Parganas. The others are scattered here and there amongst Dikku villages; a few, including the large village Harinsingha, are adjacent to the large group of Sonthal villages in Maureswar thana. In Mohammad Bazar one or two entirely new hamlets of which the cultivation has been formed in recent years are to be found. In one case six years ago a portion of a waste area estimated at 100 bighas was leased on a rental of Rs. 75 a year for a *salami* of

* There are 7 Sonthal villages in Suri thana.

† There are 13 Sonthal villages in Dubrajpur thana.

Rs. 80, the condition being that no *sâl* was to be cut. The Rajnagar villages lie on the west of that outpost in the north-west corner of the district next to the Sonthal Parganas border. In a third of these villages Dhangars, Domes, Kamars and Maharas are found living with the Sonthals. The Bolpur villages are more recent than the villages directly lying on the Sonthal Parganas border. Their age is probably not more than 40 years at the most; most of them are 20 or 21 years old, and there are others I am informed where the age of the Sonthal settlement does not exceed 10 years or so.

BANKURA

21. The figures below have been given for the thanas which contain a large Sonthal population —

I —POPULATION

THANAS.	Population.	Sonthal population.	Bhumij population	Bauri population
Gangajalghati (including Saltora)	122,399	7,709	...	25,931
Bankura (including Chhatna) ..	118,670	15,373	1,714	24,606
Khatra (including Indpore)	115,313	19,899	11,440	20,147
Raipur . .	101,345	35,166	5,480	7,172
Simlapal (independent outpost)	38,109	8,756	550	3,078
Onda (including Taldangra)	122,917	12,232	147	9,580

II —VILLAGES

	Percentage of Sonthal villages to total number of villages
Gangajalghati	10
Saltora (outpost)	9
Bankura	7
Chhatna (outpost)	38
Indpore (outpost)	19
Khatra	28
Raipur ...	70
Simlapal (independent outpost) .. .	30
Onda	11
Taldangra (outpost) . .	14

22. These figures cover the whole of the Sadar Subdivision of Bankura, excepting the Barjora Independent Outpost. The subdivision of Bishnupur has been omitted, as it contains comparatively few Sonthals. The figures in Statement II have been compiled from statistics furnished by the Police, which are only fairly accurate so far as they afford a comparison between the total number of villages and of Sonthal villages. For instance, 55 Sonthal villages are shown as existing in Taldangra, whereas the conditions of 71 villages in that outpost were examined and some 30 others were found to exist. As it is probable that the system of examination adopted in the enquiry, under which each hamlet with a different name was classed as a separate village, would show also a much larger total number of villages of all classes, if these had been counted, the Police figures have been given as sufficiently near for the purpose. The figure 70 per cent for Raipur thana is however unduly large, and appears to represent the number of villages in which there is a Sonthal population. It is undoubtedly a fact that the great majority of villages contain a Sonthal population, but it is improbable that so many villages with a population practically homogeneous exists.

23. The Sonthals in Bankura are found mainly on the west and south-west in the undulating tract, thus described by Sir William Hunter* —" In Bankura the alluvial flats end in the undulations, isolated peaks, and short, low ranges which form the advanced guard of the hill system of the central Indian plateau. A poor, ferruginous soil and hard beds of laterite here take the place of the fertile deltaic detritus, with expanses of scrub jungle and *sâl* woods for the closely-tilled village lands of the east." In the north west the Susunia and Biharinath Hills loom on the horizon, and in the south-west in Khatra and Raipur the country breaks up into ridges of low, picturesque and jungle-clad hills. Terraces of rice cultivation fill up the dips between the hills, or in wide expanses skirt the undulating uplands.

* *Vide* also the " Gazetteer of Bankura " by Mr O'Malley, I.C.S.

24. The Sonthal occupation is old; how old it is impossible to say. Chhatna, or the pargana of Samantabhum (called by the Sonthals "Santbhum"), in the north-west, named after a "Samanta" or General of the Emperor of Delhi, who is said to have subdued the original Raja, is recognized by the Sonthals of the south as having almost an equal claim to that of Sikherbhum, which is conterminous with it, to be regarded as their original home in comparatively recent times. South of Chhatna and in the north of Indpore the Sonthal population is less dense, but further south it becomes denser and denser till it reaches its maximum in Raipur. The Sonthals cannot account for the deficiency in the middle area, but enquiry elicited the fact that the ancestors of the village of Rangibari, one of the largest and one of the parent villages of a number of other villages in Khatra thana, did not come straight south from Sikherbhum, but had emigrated first south to Midnapore and then northward again. Rangibari they declare to be at least eight or ten generations old, that is, about three hundred years ago. On this theory the colonization of Khatra and Raipur proceeded from some central nucleus in Midnapore, to which they emigrated from Sikherbhum, meeting a minor stream flowing southwards from Chhatna. This accords with Colonel Dalton's theory that the Sonthals colonised from Saont in Midnapore.

25. All this is of course conjectural. But there is a curious significance in the fact that immediately south of Raipur there is a pargana, called Silda by Dikkus, but by the Sonthals "Santbhui" (really Samantabhui, having the same derivation as Samantabhum in Bankura), which is, I understand*, the Saont in Midnapore, referred to by Colonel Dalton and from which the Revd. L. O Skrefsrud derives his derivation of the word Sonthal. Any one travelling in Bankura or Midnapore and hearing the constant references of the Sonthals to the parganas, either of Santbhum in Chhatna near the Damodar, or of Santbhui in the north of Midnapore, cannot fail to be struck with the similarity between the names Santbhum, Santbhui and Sonthal. The similarity may be accidental. The Sonthal himself will not admit to it as a possible derivation. With these remarks and the hint that the word Sonthal or, as it is sometimes spelt, Santal, may be the same as Samantal, an inhabitant of the country of Samantabhum or of Samantabhui, I leave the derivation of the word.

26. In Raipur the Sonthals are the densest, and largely out-number any other tribe or class. That the Sonthal population dominates this area in point of numbers, and that it is to all intents and purposes a Sonthal country, is at once obvious to anyone who tours through this thana. Here we have the Sonthal in the country he loves, in a corner of the world remote from civilization. For the Dikku, the country still possesses all the terrors of the jungle, with its bears and leopards, magnified into tigers. Near the River Kosye the Dikku clusters in greater numbers.

27. Everywhere the Aryan proper is an immigrant. The Sonthals were there before him. But it does not follow that the Sonthals, even though their ancestors cleared the jungles and made the villages, are the original inhabitants of the country. There is reason to believe that the Bhumijes were the original people, inasmuch as they were the Ghatwals or guardians of the jungle passes. In Khatra thana there is still a large Bhumij population. A few Sonthal ex-Ghatwals exist. Another semi-aboriginal caste that exists in large numbers is the Bauri, except in Raipur where he gives way to the Sonthal.

28. The size of the village varies, in the north in Chhatna there are villages with as many as 450 inhabitants, in Indpore and Khatra there are small hamlets containing 6, 8 or 10 houses, but there are larger villages like the perganait's village Dohlah containing 40 houses; and in Raipur though the majority vary between 10 and 20 houses, there are larger villages comprising two or three *tolas*, like Rajahatu, with as many as 80 Sonthal families in them. Such aboriginal or semi-aboriginal castes or tribes as the Bauris, Bhuyas, Domes, Kurmis, Tantis, Kodas and Bhumijes are found living alongside the Sonthals in the Sonthal *tolas*, occasionally Dikkus are also found to have taken up their residence in the same *tola* to be near the source of their gains. But the latter generally live in different *tolas*. Few Muhammadans are found. Tambolis and Chaudhris have the worst reputations as grain dealers and *mahajans*. As a general rule the Sonthals have cleared the jungles and made

* *Vide* "The Aboriginal Races of the Sonthal Parganas" by Mr H McPherson, I C S

their own villages, but cases are not infrequent where Kurmis or Bhumijes have been the original clearers and have given a small patch or *khap* of jungle to the Sonthal to clear and cultivate. In Indpore, Khatra and the extreme jungly south-west of Raipur the formation of fresh hamlets in recent years has been noticed. In Onda thana, on the outskirts of the area, the Sonthal occupation is quite recent, not much more than twenty years old. That in Gangajalghati is also recent Deserted villages have been found, deserted, owing to the fear of evil spirits, or because the *mahajan* has dispossessed the Sonthals of their lands, or on account of the great famine of 1865-66, when many persons died, many persons fled and whole villages were depopulated. This famine is a historical land mark, the famine of *Bahattar* (1272 B). There are legends relating how the *mahajan* of that period gave the headman a a loan of 2 pies of grain, and in exchange took the whole village.

29 In almost every village there are to be found three or more houses of non-cultivators, who eke out a living by labouring in the neighbourhood, by biennial journeys to Burdwan for the sowing and harvesting of the rice crop, and by cultivating *bhagts* or *krishani** for Dikkus. On the outskirts of the area in Taldangra and Simlapal, it is reported that there are several Sonthal villages containing a purely labour population.

It is true that the major portion of the cultivation in Sonthal villages is still in the hands of Sonthals, but to what extent such a remark conveys an absolutely false impression of the condition of affairs will be treated in a later chapter

30. Finally, a word about the jungle. The proprietors appear to be alive to the profits to be gained from the forest, for almost everywhere the Sonthals are forbidden to cut *sál* trees In Raipur they are allowed to take other wood from the jungle, at a rate of Re. 1 or Rs. 2 a cart-load, or at a rate of 2 pies in the rupee of rent.

MIDNAPORE

31 In default of sufficiently accurate figures, it may be held that the proportion of Sonthal hamlets or villages recognised locally as possessing a separate existence, with a practically homogeneous population, to the total number of hamlets or villages is probably very nearly the same as the percentage of the Sonthal population to the whole population in each thana. Police figures for two thanas, which have been received, support this conclusion. The figures for other thanas have not been received.

THANAS	Population	Sonthal population.	Percentage	Bhumij population	Percentage.
Binpur ...	104,982	36,752	35 (38½)†	7,104	7
Salbani	60,850	11,872	20	4,003	7
Garhbeta	133,122	26,187	20	752	...
Jhargram .	76,063	19,284	25	4,304	6
Gopiballabhpur	163,153	32,405	20 (23)†	19,220	12 (12)*

† Police figures.

32. The above thanas comprise the area in this district still known as the Jungle Mahals It is generally of the same character as that in Bankura, except that it is not so hilly. Towards the west in the north-western and hilly corner of Binpur there are small scattered Sonthal villages, with a few larger villages near Silda. These give place further east to Dikku villages containing large stretches of cultivation like the neighbourhood of Binpur. But the east of the Kosye river, in the lands belonging to the Ramgarh and Lalgarh Rajas, is probably one of the most densely populated Sonthal areas in the district. Sonthal villages are spread

* A *krishan* is given a certain amount of land to cultivate for the owner. As remuneration he gets about a-third of the crop.

over Jhargram and portions of Garhbeta and Salbani. As the River Subarnarekha in Gopiballabhpur is approached, the country becomes less jungly and more fertile. South of the Subarnarekha, where the land rises towards the hills of Mourbhanj and is covered with jungle, with open spaces in it dotted here and there with small patches of jungle and isolated trees, the proportion of Sonthal and Bhumij villages considerably increases. The cultivation here is poor, and the country presents a curious gray and dreary appearance, even in brilliant sunlight. This area, with its Sonthals, Bhumijes, Pans, Bhuyias (or Purans) and Kurmi Mahtos, has up to date been rather avoided by the *mahajan* proper, except for an occasional Teli, as a place of residence. Further south in Mourbhanj, the Sonthals account for 30 per cent. of the population.

33. It is difficult to state the age of the Sonthal occupation of this district, but it is certainly very old. Many of the Sonthals have no idea whence they came originally. The Revd. A. L Kennan reports that the Lalgarh Raja said that the Sonthals were there before his ancestors arrived, four hundred years ago. He also reports that Bengalis he has consulted have been unanimous in their opinion that the Sonthals preceded them in the cultivation of most of their lands. It seems certain that the Dikkus came after the Sonthals. However that may be, the physical aspect of the country, the large proportion of aborigines and semi-aborigines in the Jungle Mahals, and the fact that it is they who have reclaimed the jungle, all combine to throw the burden of proof on the Dikku of proving that he was there first. And, so far as I am aware, except, and that only possibly, in the case of the zamindars and their immediate entourage, there is no evidence available of the same. In the extreme north-west the reclamation of the wilder portions is more recent.

34 As a rule the Sonthals are the clearers of the villages in which they are the main cultivating population, but this is no criterion south of the Subarnarekha There frequently one aboriginal tribe makes the village, leaves it, and another takes their place For example, Daikuli was originally made by Bhumijes, but they left the village, because they thought there was an evil spirit in it, giving place to a few Sonthals, Pans and Kurmis In Rokinmara the original Sonthals were replaced by Bhumijes, and after them other Sonthals came into the village. As in Bankura, a few villages were found in the north-west, which were practically depopulated of the original Sonthals in the great famine of 1865-66, and other Sonthals have now taken their place In the north Tantis, Kamars, Gorains, Bhogtas (Bhuiyas) and Kurmis are found living in the same villages as Sonthals South of the Subarnarekha cultivating Kherias and Pans must be added to this list These Pans, who call themselves Penis or Tamaria Tantis, and are of a much lighter shade of colour than either the Sonthal or the Bhumij, can talk the Sonthal language just as the Bhumij can, and in villages where the three tribes congregate together they converse together amicably in Sonthali, though both the Pan and the Bhumij have a language of their own.

35. A striking feature of Garhbeta and the areas nearer the plains particularly, Jambani (thana Jhargram) and of Nayagram (thana Gopiballabhpur) is the large labouring population, who to their knowledge never had any land of their own. In the other areas also villages are to be found containing almost a purely labouring population or only *bhagti* cultivators. Mr. Gregson estimates that 9.5 per cent. of the Sonthals now belong to the labouring population in this district. Though this figure is probably exaggerated and is more applicable to middle northern area, it is valuable as indicating the impression received by one who has been acquainted with the Sonthals in the northern portion of the district for very many years.

36. The Jungle Mahals are divided amongst large land-owners, of whom some of the chief are the Midnapore Zamindari Company in Garhbeta and Salbani, and in the large pargana of Silda, which accounts for almost the whole of the area west of the Kosye in Binpur, the Ramgarh and Lalgarh Rajas east of the Kosye in Binpur, the Raja of Jhargram in the Jhargram Pargana, which covers the greater part of the Jhargram thana; the Maharaja of Mourbhanj who owns Nayabasan and Rohini in Gopiballabhpur, and the Nawab of Murshidabad in the parganas of Nayagram and Khelargram in the east of Gopiballabhpur The south of the area differs very widely from the districts of Bankura

and Birbhum, in that the *mahajan* does not play such an important part as an intermediate proprietor

37. *Nayabasan and Rohini Estates* (*thana Gopiballabhpur*) —The figures below give the distribution of the villages amongst the different classes of population according to the record-of-rights recently prepared :—

Name of Estate	No of villages	Number of villages in which the Sonthal element‡ is 100 per cent	Number of villages in which the aboriginal* element exceeds 90 per cent	Number of villages in which the aboriginal element exceeds 50 per cent, but is below 90 per cent	Number of villages in the aboriginal element lies between 10 per cent and 50 per cent	Number of villages in which semi aboriginal† element exceeds 50 per cent	Number of villages in which semi-aboriginal element lies between 10 per cent. and 50 per cent.	Number of villages in which semi-aboriginal and aboriginal elements together exceed 10 per cent
Nayabasan ..	499	6	33	64	100	4	19	8
Rohini	174	.	5	21	47	27	24	4

* Sonthals, Bhumijes and Mundas
† Kurmi Mahtos, Bhuiyas and Danda Chattra Manjhis It is not very clear what the latter are
‡ These figures are mutually exclusive

38. In Rohini the aboriginal population is not nearly so dense as south of the River Subarnarekha in Nayabasan, where on the Mourbhanj border it generally exceeds 90 per cent. of the total village population.

The following figures show the different classes of raiyats according to the record-of-rights recently prepared for Rohini and Nayabasan :—

Estate		Total number of raiyats	Sonthal	Bhumij	Danda Chatra Manjhi.	Mahto.	Bhuiya.	Munda.	Others
Nayabasan	Those who have got holdings.	19,000	2,629	1,465	392	103	58	19	14,334
	Those who have got homestead land only	601	101	101	33	6	6	...	358
Rohini	Those who have got holdings	7,531	653	1,041	85	1,004	31	...	4,717
	Those who have got homestead land only.	30	3	4	...	14	...	...	9

From the figures obtained from the record-of-rights, it would appear that there are few labourers in the villages; as a matter of fact, villagers, at all events from the more northern quarter, who have not sufficient cultivation, regularly go off and labour in the plains. That there are only a few labourers in the villages who possess only homestead land, is due to the fact that both in this pargana of Nayabasan and particularly in the neighbouring State of Mourbhunj there are still jungles, ready to be cleared for cultivation. There is therefore every opportunity for the Sonthal of continuing his hereditary occupation of clearing the jungle, and he need not be reduced altogether to the position of a labourer yet in this area.

BALASORE

Thana.	Population	Sonthal population	Villages	Sonthal villages.
Jellasore ...	122,594	6,099	298	36

39. The Sonthal population in Balasore is mainly confined to the area in the permanently-settled pargana Fatehabad, which adjoins Mourbhanj and the Nayagram Mahal in Midnapore, in the extreme north-east corner of the district. Thirty-four of the Sonthal villages are to be found in this pargana The villages are mostly small, containing from six to eight houses, and the lands are poor.

CHAPTER III.

The Sonthal Headman and the Sonthal Communal System.

(*Terms of the Reference No. II.*)

40. *The Sonthal headman system.*—Before going into detail in this matter, it seems necessary briefly to explain first of all the nature of the Sonthal communal and headman system. When the parent village is over-crowded Sonthals prospect in the jungles for fresh land to cultivate. They then find out the zamindar of the particular patch of jungle they want to clear or have cleared in anticipation of sanction, and an arrangement as to rent is made through the headman or Manjhi, who is appointed for this purpose. Thereafter all arrangements as to rent are made through this Manjhi, who is ordinarily in no way a tenure-holder, but merely the person through whom the collective rents of the villages are paid. The villagers formerly used to parcel out the land amongst themselves into *reks*, and to appoint certain village office bearers, who each received a small amount of rent-free land, generally called *man* land, for the duties he had to perform. These seven, including the Manjhi, formed the village committee for the performance of all village business, internal, external and spiritual, or home, foreign and ecclesiastical. They were and are—

* *The Manjhi.*—The headman of the village. He represents the village in its relations with outsiders.
The Paranick or Paramanick —The headman's assistant.
The Jog-Manjhi.—The master of ceremonies in dances, weddings, etc. He is also the moral censor of the village.
The Jog-Paranick or Jog-Paramanick.—A deputy jog-manjhi.
The Naiki.—The village priest.
The Kudam Naiki.—A deputy village priest. His duty is to ward off evil spirits by offering up his own blood, scratched from his arm and mixed with rice.
The Gorait or Kotal.—The village messenger or peon.

All these officials are not however found in every district, as I shall show in dealing with each district.

41. But above the Manjhis of different villages, there is a Perganait, generally the representative of the original leader of the Sonthals to any particular locality. He decides social questions and matters of caste, in consultation with the different Manjhis. He is assisted by a deputy known as a Desh-Manjhi. The fines he inflicts frequently take the form of a supply of rice-beer. It should be quite unnecessary to mention that the village communal system is an essential part of the Sonthal national life. The Sonthal does not regard himself as a separate unit, but as part and parcel of the village community whose head and representative with the outside world, is the Manjhi. In union is strength; and when the landlord ceases to take his rent through the Manjhi and recognises each Sonthal as a separate raiyat, the first and most important step in the disintegration of the communal system has taken place. In all the areas under report, the existence of *man* land, except in isolated cases, is now practically defunct. In this chapter therefore a village will be referred to as intact, if the Sonthals still pay rent through the Manjhi or headman, to whom a receipt is given for the total of the rents of the village. As the incidents of the Sonthal headman system differ in different areas, this single definition of it will suffice in the first instance. The headman's profit used to consist of his *man* land, and the rents for excess

* This arrangement is taken from "The Tribes and Castes of Bengal".

cultivation of waste-lands. But when a village is even now intact, very little profit is, as a rule, made by the headman from the waste lands. In a broken village all the rents are paid direct to the landlord. The establishment of Manjhi, Jog-Manjhi, etc , will be referred to as the Sonthal village or communal system.

BIRBHUM.

42. *Rampur Hât Subdivision.*—In the year 1871 there were vague rumours of discontent amongst the Sonthals. Nothing happened, beyond a panic amongst the Bengalis. But Mr. T. T. Allen, who was then Magistrate of Birbhum, toured amongst the Sonthals, and finally submitted a report to Government in which he showed that the Sonthals were the objects of oppression by the zamindar and the *mahajan* in every possible way. Nothing appears to have been done till 1881, when a measurement of the Sonthal area was inaugurated and an attempt made to bring the zamindars to terms, particularly in the matter of rents, by threatening that their lands would be transferred to the Sonthal Parganas. This settlement is known as Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement, and his final report was submitted in 1883. He measured 169 villages, very nearly all of the Sonthal hamlets in the Rampur Hât subdivision. He had no power to fix rents, but he was authorised to try and get the zamindars to settle the villages through a headman called a Mostagir with the Sonthals at reasonable rents He was successful in the case of 81 villages out of 169; the notable exceptions were Lall Mohan Singh of Gopalpur in Murarai and the Mohant of Mollarpur. The result was that the zamindars who accepted the proposals, gave leases to the Mostagirs for seven years.

43. The benefits that accrued to the Sonthals were according to the Settlement Report :—

"(*a*) The holding of each raiyat has been accurately measured, defined and recorded in the measurement papers, and the annual amount of rent payable by him has been in most cases fixed at the Sonthal Parganas rates. There is therefore now no fear of arbitrary enhancement or rent or ejectment The lease is to run for seven years, commencing from the first day of the current Bengali year 1289.

(*b*) After the expiration of the lease, there will be a new settlement ; and until that is accomplished, either by mutual agreement or by the intervention of the Court, the Manjhi and his raiyats will continue to pay the *jama* now fixed

(*c*) All illegal cesses and *abwabs* have been abolished, and cesses which the Manjhis and the raiyats will henceforth have to pay will be the Road and Public Works cesses, and any other cess which the Government may hereafter impose. The system of *bhet begar* or free labour hitherto supplied by the Sonthals to the land-holders has also been abolished.

(*d*) Every headman or Manjhi of the village has been supplied with a rent-roll under my seal and signature, showing the names of his raiyats, the quantities of lands of different kinds held by each, the rates at which the lands have been assessed, and the total rent payable by each man. The Sonthals will not have to pay the Manjhi a farthing in excess of the amount specified in this paper.

(*e*) Waste lands reclaimed by the Sonthal raiyats during the term of the lease will be assessed at half-rates, and the other half rates remitted.

(*f*) The Manjhi or headman did not* hitherto enjoy rent-free or *man* lands, and he will therefore, as his remuneration for collection duty, get from the land-holder a commission at 6¼ per cent of the money realized, *plus* the half-rates which the Sonthal raiyats will have to pay for waste lands brought into cultivation, he will also during the continuance of the lease enjoy rent-free waste lands which he may himself reclaim. It will be thus

* *Sic* Probably a clerical error The records show the existence of *man* lands. The "not" should be omitted.

seen that during the term of the lease (seven years) the landholder will not get a farthing for waste-lands brought into cultivation.

(g) To the headman and raiyats has been secured the right of cutting grass and brushwood for domestic purposes free.

(h) The Sonthals will have the rent-free enjoyment of the fruits of the trees planted by themselves or their ancestors. The right of cutting these trees for building purposes has also been secured to them.

(i) The Sonthals price highly *mahua* fruits and flowers, and the rent-free possession of these has been secured to them. They will not however have the power of cutting these trees without the permission of the landholders.

(j) Sonthals hitherto enjoyed rent-free possession of homestead lands. This privilege has been retained to them by the present arrangement."

44. The status of the headman is to a certain extent that of a temporary tenure-holder, and such he has been held to be by the Courts.

I

Village	Number of Sonthal villages.	Number of Sonthal villages examined	Number now intact	Number now broken
Murarai	35	33	18	15
Nalhati	44	40	20	20
Rampur Hât .	80	67	25	42
Maureswar. ...	44*	35	7†	28
Total ...	203	175	70	105

II

Number of Sonthal villages of which settlement was effected with a headman by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha (1881-83).	81	69	42	27
Number of villages measured, of which settlement was not affected by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha.	88	75	19	56
Total .	169	144	61	83

* Believed to be an under-estimate

† Includes five villages in which the Sonthals pay rent separately to one proprietor and through a headman to another.

45. The above statements show the numbers of intact and broken villages out of those examined. The 169 villages of Statement II are included in the 203 in Statement I. The most valuable result is obtainable from Statement II, and that is that at the least one-third of the villages settled by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha in 1882, and at the least three-fourths of those which were measured by him but not settled, are now broken

46. Though in 88 villages the settlement of the Deputy Collector was not accepted, yet in some cases, *e.g.*, in the case of the villages of Lall Mohan

Singh, the proprietors appear to have made such settlements with Mostagirs, but at their own rates of rent. The Mostagiri system also still existed at the time in a number of these villages. But the Mohant of Mollarpur, who owned 32 of them, coveted their *khas* possession, and he proceeded to break down the system by bringing rent suits against the Mostagirs for arrears of rent and turning them out. According to the Sonthals, he did not always employ this procedure, but merely evicted them. Finally, the relations between the Mohant and his tenants became so strained, that a settlement of his estate under the Bengal Tenancy Act was ordered. This was carried into effect by Munshi Nundji who submitted his report in 1893. No attempt was made to reintroduce the Mostagiri system in this estate, but fair rents, as will be shown later, were settled.

47. It will be observed that two of the essential features of the Sonthal headman system in this area are—firstly, the purely temporary nature of the headman's right; and, secondly, the mutability of the rent.

48. *Broken Villages*—In many cases the method by which the village came to be broken was unknown. It is therefore impossible to divide the broken villages into classes satisfactorily. The number of villages which have been broken by being sold up for rent is certainly large. No less than 18 such villages were counted, besides the 32 villages of the Mohant of Mollarpur, the majority of which, Munshi Nundji states in his settlement report, were sold up for arrears of rent. The notes recorded during the enquiry on this area show that, according to the Sonthal, a fair number of villages were resumed, but they also show that, where the zamindar's agent could give a reliable explanation, they were actually sold up for arrears of rent. Salbani (Murarai), for instance, was settled with a Mostagir, who died leaving a minor. According to the Sonthal, the zamindar simply resumed the village, as a matter of fact it was subsequently sold up for arrears of rent, and a settlement made with a *mahajan*. At rent sales the proprietor generally purchases the village. There is thus very little evidence to show that those proprietors who accepted Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement have done much in the way of deliberate resumption, though in a few cases the system has broken down, because at the end of the lease the rent was raised; the Mostagir could not pay the increased rent, and the village was either resumed or sold up.

49. To the temporary nature of the headman's right must be attributed the fact that only 13 cases have been counted in which the *mahajan* has bought the villages privately or in an auction sale for a money-decree, within recent years. But on going deep enough into the circumstances of all the villages, it will be found that in a large number the breakage is initially due to the *mahajan*. For example, at Karangdih [*vide* Appendix I(*a*), No. III] the breakage was due to the fact that the Bhagats had so involved the Sonthals in debt as to lead to the village being sold up for arrears of rent. The Bhagats subsequently got a lease of the village. In some cases the proprietors are also *mahajans*, like the Mulhati Babus. They have obtained direct possession of a number of villages after *mahajani* transactions with the Sonthals.

50. *Intact villages.*—The most notable example of a proprietor who has kept his villages intact is Babu P. C. Pande of Pakour. He has also maintained the rent fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha. Another example is P. C. Chaudhuri, but rents have been largely increased. Generally, at the termination of the lease, a fresh measurement is made by the proprietor before granting a fresh lease at a higher rate. In some cases rent is paid by each Sonthal separately for the new lands, while the rent for the original land is paid jointly to the Mostagir. In the case of a few villages the Sonthals pay rent through a Mostagir jointly to one set of proprietors, but individually to another.

51. *Commission.*—Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha fixed the headman's commission at one anna in the rupee paid by the proprietor. This is still paid in some cases, though by no means in all. In the *pattas* recently granted by P. C. Chaudhuri no mention of it is made. In a few cases also the *mustagirs* say they get commission from their raiyats also.

52. *Village system.*—The Sonthal village system is full of vigour in this subdivision. In the Rampur Hât thana there is a perganait, Durga Manjhi, who exercises a great deal of influence over the people. To him a reference has

Page 1.

already been made. In small villages the village officials have to double their parts; and in villages where there has been a large amount of dispossession some of the officials have ceased to exist, as in Tetilbandi where there is no Paranick or Jog-Manjhi. *Man* land has practically ceased to exist.

SADAR SUBDIVISION.

VILLAGE.	Number of Sonthal villages.	Number examined.	Number found intact.	Number found broken
Mohammad Bazar ...	26	17	5	12
Rajnagar ...	68	55	10	45
Bolpur	37	37	(Headman system never existed)	

53. The headman has the right of letting out waste-lands, and even now holds *man* lands in the Rajnagar villages. Out of the 72 villages examined in Mohammad Bazar and Rajnagar, 17 villages were counted in which the *mustagiri* right was known to have been sold to a *mahajan*; 16 others were counted in which the right had either been sold up for arrears of rent or had been resumed by the landlord. For the rest it was unknown how the breakage had come about. It may be presumed that the *mahajan* is mainly responsible. Some of these villages were settled in the Burdwan Khas Mahal settlement in the early nineties, and the Mostagir was then recorded as a raiyat, and the other Sonthals as under-raiyats. Cases have been found [*vide* Kusumkandor Appendix I(*a*), No. XVI] of half of the right of the collection of rents being sold to a *mahajan*.

BANKURA.

I.

THANA.	Number of Sonthal villages (approximate).	Number of villages examined.	Number found intact.	Number found broken
Bankura (including Chhatna)...	145	Unknown	Nil	All believed to be broken (145).
Gangajalghati (including Saltora)	90	Do.	3	Practically all (87)
Indpore (outpost)	56	32	8	24
Khatra	125	84	20	64
Raipur	475	202	26	176
Simlapal (outpost) ...	119	84	29	55
Onda	[illegible]	22	Nil	22
Taldangra (outpost) ...	100	71	29	42
Total ...	......	......	115	615

II.

Estate.	Year.	Number of villages with a Sonthal Mandal.
Shyamsundarpur, Raja Sir Sourindra Mohan Thakur (Court of Wards) in Raipur ...	1892 1909	14 10
Ambikanagore, Raja Sir Sourindra Mohan Thakur (Court of Wards) in Khatra	1884 1909	4 1
Gisborne & Co. (Raipur)	1884 1909	19 2*

* Including one partly under a Sonthal Mandal.

54. In these statements all villages in which the Sonthal headman of the village, whatever his proprietory right is, pays the rent of the village, have been classed as intact. In this district the Sonthal headman system is merged in the Mandali system, common to all castes and tribes. According to this system, the Mandal who is the representative of the original clearers of the village, collects the rent of the village for the rent receiver and receives some service land in exchange It is practically confined to the south western portion of the district, particularly to the thanas of Raipur and Khatra. It ceased to exist very long ago in Chhatna. But in the south-west it has become transferable, heritable and divisible The service land where it exists amongst the Sonthals is not generally recognised as remuneration for the headman's service in collecting rent, but as remuneration for the services performed by the Manjhi in the Sonthal village system. Occasionally, however the Mandal has to pay a nominal rent called *panchak* to the landlord for his *nij jote* lands, wherever a separate settlement has been made regarding these lands at the same time as the settlement of the village. No authentic cases of recent resumption of the Mandali right by a landlord have been discovered. Under the heading of intact villages, besides the Mandali tenure, other tenures have been entered when there is one rent-payer for the village.

55. These are :—

(1) *Mokurrari or darmokurrari tenures.*—In such cases a rent is fixed in perpetuity, and some *salami* has to be paid. For example some land in Kendbune in Indpore was let out at a rental of Rs. 18-12 in 1886, for which *salami* of Rs. 75 had to be paid. There was also an arrangement in the *patta* that 18 carts of wood, valued at Re. 1-2, should be supplied by the Sonthal per annum. There is no jungle now, and the price of wood having gone up, the proprietor now wants Rs. 18 a year instead of Re 1-2. In the same hamlet some other sharers (proprietors) have given a *darmokurrari* lease to the Sonthals, in which there is an arrangement that one seer of *ghee* should be paid annually in addition to the rent Where a *patta* has been given jointly in the name of all the Sonthals, sometimes each pay their rents separately.

(2) *Jangalburi tenures.*—In such a case proprietors let out the jungle for clearing on progressive rates of rent, only a nominal or no rent being charged in the first instance.

(3) *Jamai or jote tenure.*—This is a hereditary and transferable tenure, of land given to the Sonthals for the purposes of cultivation. Sometimes it is given to a number of Sonthals in a village jointly.

(4) *Ghatwali tenure* —Only one or two Sonthal Ghatwali tenures have been found.

In some cases a portion of the tenure is *panchaki i.e*, granted on a nominal for rent services rendered.

56. *Broken villages* —In a very large proportion of the villages, it was impossible to discover how the system under which the Sonthals used to pay through a Mandal to the proprietor came to be broken. It was admitted by all the old men that the system was once universal. In Raipur, where I examined 119 villages, I found that 47 villages had been broken by sales to *mahajans*, but there was reason to believe that in the majority of other cases the village had been broken in the same way, because there was such a large number of *mahajan* proprietors, *e g*, Goberda in the Appendix I A(*b*), No. VIII. Only seven of these 119 were known to have been sold up for rent. A small proportion have been sold for money decrees. A hamlet of Mayurlachna was sold in execution of a decree for the value of the large trees the Sonthals had cut. Two cases in Raipur were found of the Manjhi having sold his right to a Sunri liquor vendor, on account of debts incurred at the liquor shop. In a few cases, like Pacham, the Manjhi had employed a Dikku to collect his rents for him, and the latter had subsequently obtained possession of the village. Even now, as in Badla, the Sonthals, who still retain an eleven-anna share of the village, maintain a Sunri muharrir to collect the rents. They pay him Rs. 2 a year, and he gets 4 pice in the rupee of rent from the *parjas* or raiyats.

Considering the nature of the Mandali tenure, it often happens that only a share is sold to a *mahajan*, and the raiyats in the other shares still pay rent to the Sonthal holders of these shares. But occasionally there would be a difficulty, because the *mahajan* would then consider the whole village had been sold and would proceed to take possession. In one instance in Saldohra the other Sonthals managed to obtain the shares again through the Civil Court, but they had to transfer these very shares to the *mahajans* who had financed them in the case. In a number of cases the headman lost his right at the time of the great famine of 1865-66. In Taldangra, I am informed, the headman's raiyats are regarded as under-raiyats.

57. In broken villages the Sonthals cultivate in the following tenures —

(1) *Jamai or jote right.*—This is really a raiyati right. It is either permanent (*chhiosthir or maurusi*), temporary (*miyadi*) or verbal (*mukhjabani*).

(2) *Mokurrari right held at a rent fixed in perpetuity.*—Occasionally individual Sonthals or individual groups of Sonthals are given a *mokurrari* lease of a small portion or *chak* or jungle.

(3) "*Sajhai*" *on a produce rent.*—The origin is generally a sale of the tenant's raiyati right to a *mahajan*, who again resettles it at a higher produce rent [*vide* Ledhapokur and Harnagurni in the Appendix I (*b*), Nos IX and XXV]. The amount of produce is definitely fixed.

(4) "*Bhagti*."—The produce is divided between the landlord and tenant, generally in equal shares. The origin is frequently the same as in the case of *sajhai* In Onda, however, it is reported that the Sonthals have cultivated lands *bhagti* ever since they had been there.

(5) "*Kurfa*" *as an under-raiyat.*—

58. Compared with the total number of broken villages examined, the number of intact villages is small. This number is, however, much larger than a settlement would disclose, because in a settlement a number of these intact hamlets which are generally small, would be classed together as one village, this could not operate to the same extent in the broken villages, as these are more often revenue mauzas.

59 The figures in Statement II on page 17 are interesting as showing the fall in the number of intact villages in selected estates. During recent years this fall is most marked in the estate of Messrs. Gisborne and Company in Raipur.

The transfer of the Mandali right has expedited the dispossession of the Sonthals. Before the transfer of this right, transfers of tenants' rights also frequently occur in a village, but when it is broken, the *mahajan* becomes the landlord and sees to it that he is the tenant's chief *mahajan*, with the result that in the end he obtains almost all the best lands in the village.

60. *The village system.*—The Sonthal village system shows little or no signs of breaking down. In every village five at least of the different officials are to be found, unless another post is temporarily vacant. The two officials that are not always found are the Jog-Paranick and the Kudam-Naiki. The first, the Jog-Paranick, in some areas in the south-west is quite unknown, and his office has never been heard of The second, the Kudam-Naiki, generally performs the work of four or five villages. In Chhatna it is reported that the Paranick is also rare

Occasionally there is plurality of officers. It is not uncommon to find that the Manjhi is also the Naiki of the village, this is generally the case in Chhatna Regarding the village system in Bankura, the Rev. G. E. Woodford, of the Wesleyan Mission at Sarenga, writes; "It is exceedingly tenacious of life, and not likely, in my opinion, to disappear altogether. The village officials still hold sway in the Sonthal villages of this area, even where the Morels (Mandals or Manjhis) no longer own the village lands, and where the *khem* lands have passed out of the hands of the officials But this village system is so intimately associated with the social and religious customs of the people that it is practically impossible for it to disappear altogether so long as the Sonthal race retains any individuality at all." These remarks were endorsed at every point by the results of the present enquiry. Originally *man*, or as they are called in Bankura *khem*, lands existed in every village. With the

disappearance of the headman's right to collect rents in the village, these service lands have in the majority of cases disappeared, and are not even to be found in intact villages. The most common that still remain are the Goraiti and Naiki service lands, but there are a few intact villages where the majority still exist. In Kosia in Raipur all the *khem* lands, except that of the Jog-Manjhi still existed. In Khatra and Raipur, so I am informed, the Perganait's jurisdiction is co-terminous with that of the thana; it is certainly the case with Khatra. In Khatra also the Perganait has a *chakladar* to help him; he is apparently the Perganait's gorait or messenger. Both the Perganaits of Khatra and Raipur are young men of very little apparent influence at present.

MIDNAPORE

61. The conditions and incidents of the headman system in Midnapore vary not only from thana to thana, but from estate to estate, and it is only in the Raja of Ramgarh's property that it still exists to any great extent. Elsewhere* it has almost disappeared, or has been entirely broken down by the proprietors. The following remarks show the condition of affairs in each thana, so far as the principal estates are concerned.

62 *Thana Binpur (Silda)*.—In the Silda pargana, accounting for the greater part of the thana of Binpur west of the river Kosye, the Midnapore Zamindari Company report that 38 villages out of 918 are held by Sonthal Mandals, which is almost one-eighth of the number it ought to be. The trouble of the Sonthals began when Gangaram Dutt acquired the *patni* right is this pargana. He purchased the Mandali right of certain Sonthals by rent decrees He subsequently leased the *patni* right in the estate to Messrs. Watson and Company The tehsildars of the estates purchased the Mandali rights privately or in rent sales, then other money-lenders appeared on the scene and acquired the Mandali rights of the Sonthals. The incidents of the Mandali system are generally the same as those prevailing in the south of Bankura, hereditary, divisible and transferable, sometimes perpetual and sometimes limited to a term of years. The new creations are now generally limited to a term of years. The Mandal is called either a Pradhan, Mandal or Manjhi. There are however a few cases of villages in which the Mandali right is not transferable. Out of 30 villages I examined, 15 had been broken on account of debts incurred by the Mandali family, four or five had been sold up for arrears of rent; in the rest it was not very clear how it occurred.

63. *Binpur (Ramgarh)* —The condition of affairs in the north of the thana, east of the Kosye, in the Raja of Ramgarh's estate, is quite different. Here the Mandali right in the village is not divisible, and the Mandal has learnt to make a profit from the rents. Occasionally the Raja re-measures the village and brings a suit for enhancement of rent. A compromise on the total rent of the village is made, and the Sonthal is left with a profit. The position of the Mandal is practically that of a tenure-holder. He nominally holds a certain amount of his land rent-free, but all these lands are practically so. Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin found 50 villages out of 69 he investigated intact in this area, and he assigns this large proportion to the fact that the Mandals make a profit on their collections. Considering that a profit must form a bait for the *mahajans*, this does not appear to be a very satisfactory reason. But as I did not go into this area, I refrain from hazarding a more satisfactory explanation.

64. *Binpur (Lalgarh)*.—In the Lalgarh Estate, in the south of this area, west of the Kosye, the villages are practically all broken.

65. *Thana Garhbeta*.—In this thana the Mandali system goes under the name of aimadari, but no village was found in which a Sonthal now possesses this right. The incidents of the aimadari tenure are practically the same as those of *junglebari* tenures, subject to no rent or a small quit-rent for the first few years, and then to a fixed or a progressive rent; heritable, transferable and unresumable. In almost all the villages the Sonthal's right as an aimadar ceased to exist 40 or 50 years ago.

Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin examined 188 Sonthal villages in this area with the following results: In 120 villages there were once Sonthal

* I have no information regarding the Jhargram Estate.

Mandals or Aimadars; in 35 of these the Sonthal Mandal had sold his right to defray his debts; in 54 it is unknown how the right ceased to exist; in 6 it was surrendered; and in 19 others it was said to have to been forcibly taken away. In 22 villages, Sonthals were found to be the sole occupants of their hamlets, but holding no land.

In 32 other villages, the Sonthals in the village had individually taken settlements of patches of jungle from the Dikku aimadar for the purpose of reclamation. In eight villages the Sonthals cultivate the lands, made by them, *bhagti*; and in six others some of the Sonthals hold raiyati lands.

66. *Thana Salbani*.—The Mandal in this area goes by the name of ijaradar. A lease of the village is given for a short term of years. No Sonthal ijaradar was found in any Sonthal village, except one amongst those examined by Maulvi Syed Muhammad Naziruddin. In 50 homogeneous villages he examined, he found 11 in which the *ijara* had passed to a *mahajan* for the Sonthal's debts, and four in which it had been sold up for arrears of rent; in the remainder it was not clear how the right had ceased to exist. The Sonthal ijaradar practically ceased to exist many years ago.

In 17 other villages examined, it was alleged that the Sonthals had never had a Sonthal ijaradar; in 12 others the Sonthal cultivators had not made the lands of the village. There are a few villages containing only Sonthal labourers or *bhagti* cultivators.

67. *Thana Jhargram (Jambani)*—There are 20 Sonthal villages which are more or less homogeneous, of these, nine are still held by Sonthal Mandals. The Mandal right is not divisible. The Mandal has no rent-free lands, but he gets a profit of 3 annas per bigha on each raiyat's holding. When the Mandal's rent is increased, he proportionately increases the rent of each raiyat.

There are 30 other villages here in which Sonthals live, but the latter are labourers. It is reported that not more than 40 per cent. of them have got any lands.

68. *Thana Gopiballabhpur*.—In this thana the Mandali right appears to have been almost purely that of a collector of rents, and in places almost resumable at will. It corresponds more closely to the headman system of the Sonthal Parganas.

69. *Nayabasan and Rohini*.—In these parganas the village headman goes by the name of Pradhan. The tenure is regarded as hereditary, and the Pradhan's remuneration for collecting the rents of the village is 12½ per cent. on the collections. It is not divisible, nor is it transferable. The following figures show how the Pradhani tenure has fared since 1291 (1883-84) in Nayabasan, and since 1299 (1891-92) in Rohini:—

Name of Estate.	Total number of villages	Total number of villages containing over 50 per cent aboriginal population	Total number of villages containing over 50 per cent semi-aboriginal population.	Former number of headmen.			Present number of headmen.		Number of villages in column 5 now *khas*.	
1	2	3	4	5			6		7	
Nayabasan	499	103	4	Sonthal headmen ...	62	83	18	24	36*	49
				Bhumij headmen ..	21				13	
Rohini ...	174	26	27	Sonthal headmen ...	6†	16	4‡	8	2	6
				Bhumij headmen ..	10		4		4	
				Mahto headmen ...	23		17		5	

* Includes one held jointly by a Bhumij and Dikku.
† Ditto three ditto by a Sonthal and Bhuiya, and one held jointly by a Sonthal and a Mahto.
‡ Ditto one held jointly with a Mahto

The following is an account of the decrease in numbers of the aboriginal Pradhans in Nayabasan given by Babu Rampada Chatterji:—

"The Pradhan was a middle-man between the proprietor and the cultivator. The latter used to pay rent to the Pradhan who was responsible to the proprietor for the rent of the entire village. For the collection of the rent and for calling the tenants, the Pradhan had a village officer called a *Kotal*. He was a servant of the Pradhan. His pay used to be deducted from the gross rent of the village. Twelve and-a-half per cent. of the net collection, after this deduction, was the Pradhan's remuneration.

"In 1288 *Amli* (1880-81) Raja Krishna Chandra Bhanj Deo, the father of of the present Maharaja of Mourbhanj, the proprietor of this estate, in view of a general settlement of Nayabasan proper, called a large number of influential tenants of the pargana and took the signatures of about 700 of them on an agreement, by which these people bound themselves to allow measurement to be made and a settlement done of Nayabasan proper (as distinguished from Rohini). This agreement was not registered owing to the death or absence of a few of the executants. In pursuance of this agreement a measurement was made in 1289 of the 499 villages under report. But in that year the Raja died. His son, the present Maharaja, was then a minor. The estate was taken under the Court of Wards, and Babu Kali Narayan Ray, Manager under the Court of Wards, made a settlement and prepared a *jamabandi* in 1291 (1883-84). This settlement was confirmed owing to the Board of Revenue This settlement was for 15 years. It expired in 1899-1900. By this settlement, the rents of individual raiyats were determined by applying the rules agreed upon in the agreement of 1288 *Amli*, upon the area found by the measurement of 1289 *Amli*, according to the different classes of soil. The village asset was then determined. From it, the pay of the village officers, expenses for the worship of village deities, etc., were deducted, and of the net amount thus found 12½ per cent. (and in exceptional cases 15 per cent.) was granted as Pradhani allowance and a settlement was made in the majority of cases with the Pradhan, who was granted a copy of the abstract *jamabandi* showing the area and rent of each tenant, with instructions to collect according to it The office of the Pradhan was *hereditary*; but when he died without leaving a deserving heir, or when he relinquished the office, the estate was at liberty to make *khas* collection or to appoint a new Pradhan.

"In 1900, on the expiry of the above settlement, the proprietor wanted to revise the settlement But the Pradhans and the tenants were not willing to allow it Various complications arose out of the imprudence and want of sympathy of the local officers of the estate. A great combination of the Pradhans and the tenants took place. Lawlessness prevailed. The old Manager was recalled Babu Purna Chandra Mitter, a retired Judicial officer, was appointed Manager. With his willingness to do justice to all parties, and with the active intervention of the Collector and Commissioner, order was at length restored This eventually gave occasion to the inception of the present Survey and Settlement operation.

"In 1904 the Manager publicly announced that he was willing to accept *kabuliyats* from the Pradhans and the tenants who would come to terms But most of them decided in favour of *khas* collection. I cannot do better than quote from Mr. J. H. Kerr's letter (while Collector of Midnapore) to the Commissioner, No. 223Ch., dated 25th October 1904.—

"'At about 3 P.M. a crowd of some 300 or 400 people assembled, including about 60 Pradhans, and said they had decided that it would be best that the Pradhani system should be abolished, and that they would raise no objection if the *Raj* made direct collections from the raiyats I closely questioned 45 of the Pradhans individually, including all the leaders of the *melée*, but they adhered to their declaration I warned them of the important and far-reaching effect of their decision, and I am satisfied that they thoroughly understood the position and were acting voluntarily.'

"The reason assigned by Mr. Kerr is detailed in paragraph 5 of the above letter. It runs thus —

"'Owing to the attitude assumed by the leaders of the Pradhans, it is not any easy matter to decide what the real reason is, but I think the story

told by the smaller men gives the key of the situation. Several of them said that they had no influence over the raiyats, and that the trouble of collecting rents was not worth the 15 per cent. (or 12½ per cent.) allowed them for collection charges. A number of others said, that now that there was no waste land left in their villages, it was no longer profitable to be a Pradhan, and they did not care to be merely tahsildars. On the whole, I am strongly inclined to believe that it is the extension of cultivation which is mainly responsible for the present state of affairs; where waste-land is plentiful, the Pradhans make a profit from settling it. The rent-roll is fluctuating, and their collection accounts cannot be closely scrutinised The Pradhan is a man of authority and influence in the village. But where extension of cultivation has reached its limit, as it has in a considerable part of the pargana, all these conditions are reversed. The Pradhan loses much of his influence by the fact that he has no longer any waste-lands to settle. This loss of influence renders it more difficult for him to collect rents, and at the same time as the rent roll is fixed the management brings closer scrutiny to bear upon his account.' "

70 *Belyabera.*—Belyabera belongs to Babu K. C. Prohoraj. A measurement was made in or about 1898, and the villages made *khas.* The Mandal used to receive a fixed remuneration for his work.

71. *Nayagram and Khelargram.*—In the Nayagram and Khelargram Mahals the old Court of Wards *jumabandis* 1886 show that the Mandal's right had been resumed even then, and the villages made *khas.*

72 *The village system.*—The Manjhi, Jog-Manjhi, Gorait and Naiki are to be found in every village, and an occasional Kudam-Naiki, the Jog-Paranick is practically unknown, and a Paranick does not exist in every village. Posts are duplicated, and in the south, where the Kudam-Naiki is also almost unknown, it is by no means an uncommon occurrence to find only two men in the villages distributing the various duties amongst them; *e g*, the Manjhi is almost universally the Naiki, and the posts of Gorait and Jog-Manjhi are more often duplicated than not. The existence of the village system does not depend upon whether the village is intact or not, but doubtless the disappearance of *khem* lands once enjoyed by the different officials free of rent has led to this duplication of posts, as the officials can now only look for remuneration in the shape of rice beer, or what the villagers are pleased to give them for their performances. Practically, the only *khem* lands to be found now are that enjoyed by the Manjhi in intact villages in areas like Ramgaih, where he is practically a tenure-holder, and to all intents and purposes all his land is rent-free; and that enjoyed by the Naiki, occasionally both in intact and broken villages. The Kanungo reports that in some intact villages he has discovered the existence of other *khem* lands; in none of those that I examined did I come across any. Such cases are rare; most of them have now been assessed to rent. The more frequent existence of Naiki *khem* land shows that some respect has occasionally been paid by the Bengalis to the religion of the Sonthals. In Gopiballabhpur in one village a Kurmi priest was found performing the duties of Naiki for the Sonthal.

In the pargana of Nayabasan there are three Perganaits. In Gopiballabhpur, in the Nayagram and Khelargram estates, instead of dividing their jurisdictions according to estates, or according to thanas as in Bankura, the Perganaits had divided the estates amongst themselves according to the collection circles of the Nawab. In one circle there were complaints that the Nawab's tahsildar had usurped the powers of the Perganait, and insisted on settling their disputes himself. The Perganait is helped by a Desh-Pradhan.

BALASORE

	Intact.	Broken.
Four annas share of pargana Fatehabad	Nil	9
Ten annas ditto ditto	25	Nil

73. Originally there were Sonthal headmen in the four annas share of the pargana, which share is now held by two widows. But with the appointment of tahsildars, the headman gradually became a mere go-between them and the tenants, and finally their only duty has now become that of collecting the latter together to pay the rent.

In the ten annas share, Sonthal headmen called ijaradars still exist. They merely collect the rents and in return receive land for their services. *ijaras* are given for a term of years only, and, if untransferable, are scarcely worth transferring. At the end of the term of years, the landlord can give the *ijara* to whomsoever he pleases. According to the above statement furnished by the estate, it would appear all the Sonthal villages were held by Sonthal ijaradars; one other village was, however, found in which the ijaradar was a Dikku. One village is held by a Sonthal on a perpetual *ijara*.

74. *Village system.*—There is a Perganait for each of the two shares into which parganna Fatehabad is divided. Besides the Desh-Pradhan, a Kazi helps the Perganait in dealing with social cases; it appears it is his duty to realise the fine imposed, whether it is in money or rice-beer. As in the south of Midnapore, the seven officials are reduced to five at the utmost, the Manjhi, the Paranick, the Jog-Manjhi, the Naiki and the Gorait; and these five posts, if the Paranick exists, which also is not always the case, are in practice held by two persons, and at the most by three persons, in the village. The Pradhan or Manjhi, the Gorait and the Naiki have still got in some cases *man* or service lands left. But this is, in the case of the Pradhan and Gorait, more for their services as servants of the landlord, than for their duties in the village community. These two are appointed and dismissed at the will of the landlord.

CHAPTER IV.

Loss of Lands by Sonthals, and their Indebtedness.

(*Terms of the Reference No. III.*)

75. As directed by Government in the terms of the reference, the rate of mutation has been shown by examining the facts regarding each raiyat in a number of villages in each area of a representative character. These facts have been recorded in the description of different villages in the Appendices [Nos. I (*a*), I (*b*), I (*c*) and I (*d*)], and they afford a more striking proof of the great rate at which the Sonthals are losing their lands than anything else can.

In fact, the state of affairs is even worse than that shown by the figures in the Appendix, because it is always the best lands that go into the hands of the *mahajans*. The latter have no use for the larger area of uplands.

BIRBHUM

Appendices II(*a*) and III(*a*)

	Private sales by Sonthals.	Civil Court sales of Sonthals' lands.			Simple mortgages by Sonthals.	Usufructuary mortgages by Sonthals.
		Rent	Money decree.	Title, suit, etc.		
1906 .	75	19	8	6	70	9
1907 ...	54	17	3	3	51	7

The above figures dealing with Sonthals have been obtained from the Registrar and from the District Judge.

76. *Birbhum, Rampur Hât subdivision—Private sale.*—The District Sub-Registrar reports that 60 per cent. of the private sales of land are on account of previous debts. This is a moderate estimate. The vast majority of those cases that came under enquiry belonged to this category.

The price at which the Sonthal sells his land is exceedingly low (*vide* Appendix II). It is generally between Rs. 10 and Rs. 20 a bigha. This is because the *mahajan* can practically fix what price he likes, whilst the Sonthal has very little idea of the value of his land.

In villages like Dharmpur, Karangdih and Debdattapur [Appendix I(*a*), Nos. III, VIII and X] where the proprietor is also a *mahajan*, the degree of dispossession is very large, and the Sonthals are practically servants of the *mahajan* proprietors. Dharmpur and Debdattapur are closer to the market town Rampur Hât than other villages. It is in such villages that are nearer the *mahajan's* head-quarters that the most dispossession is to be found. In these cases some of the land has been given out again to the Sonthal *adhi* (half of the crop goes to the landlord) or on a temporary under-raiyati lease. But the land usually goes away from the Sonthal altogether, because the Dikku can pay a higher rate of rent.

In intact villages like Jagarnathpur or Murgadanga [Appendix I(*a*), Nos. II and V] the dispossession is not so striking. At first sight this appears to be due to the fact that they are intact villages, and it is a fact that intact villages show less dispossession than other villages. But one reason is certainly to be found in the fact that the land is generally of poorer quality in the majority of such villages that are still intact. In villages like Saldaha and Sealdanga [Appendix I(*a*), No. VI] where there is better land, there is more dispossession.

77. *Rent decrees.*—Though considerably less than that effected by private sale, a large amount of transfer has been effected by rent decrees. Barameshia, Gobrajolo, Saldoha and Tetilbandi [Appendix I(*a*), Nos. VI and XI] are examples. Another example is that of Jetia [Appendix I(*a*), No. XIII], but in this case the land is still in the possession of the Sonthals; the transfer is shown in the increased indebtedness of the Sonthals who have had to execute *kistibandis* or arrangements for yearly repayments of the amount due on the rent decree. Except in the Mohant's villages,—Jetia is one of these—where I am informed that the first choice of vacant Sonthal land is given to other Sonthals, the land is generally settled with a Dikku, because the latter can pay a higher rate of rent. The decrees are generally *ex-parte*.

78. *Civil Court decrees*.—Civil court decrees generally follow on mortgages or on money suits if the Sonthal does not agrees to the *mahajan's* terms. The figures in the Appendix show that the plaintiff is almost always successful and that in at least 50 per cent. of the cases the decrees are *ex-parte*. A favourite defence in this area, where a *mahajan* is resisted in obtaining possession of land sold to him, is to assert that the deed was a mortgage, and that the Sonthal did not know it was a sale. In the case of Karangdih this was unsuccessful. The number of transfers of this kind are comparatively few.

79. *Usufructuary mortgages.*—The very small number of usufructuary mortgages shown in the returns is a curious commentary on the greed of the *mahajan* to obtain possession of the land, without any chance of its going back to the Sonthal.

80. *General.*—The above classes do not, however, exhaust the number of ways in which transfers occur. Occasionally an illness occurs in the village, the villagers think the village is bewitched and flee. This is said by the to have happened in Dharmpur [Appendix I(*a*), No X]. It is doubtful, because documents were produced of sales of land in the village to the *mahajans*. But in Sibpahari this occurred. Occasionally a Sonthal having lost some land leaves the rest which is practically valueless, and goes off to pastures new. In some cases, they have run away because the rent has been too high and they have been unable to pay up the arrears.

81. *Indebtedness.*—Every Sonthal has to take every year, after the supply of grain of the previous harvest has been exhausted, supplies of grain from time to time from his *mahajan*. Of this he repays what he can with his paddy at 50 per cent. interest, called *derhia*. No matter when he takes the loan, interest for the *whole* year is charged when the account is made up at the end of the year. The transactions are made by volume. The Sonthal repays newly reaped paddy for what he took as dried paddy. Consequently owing to the shrinkage in size, this interest would work out at less than 50 per cent. by weight, were it not for the fact that there is every reason to believe that the

mahajans use different measures for their receipts and disbursements. But where the shoe pinches is in that the *mahajan* charges compound interest. The small unpaid amount of the year is carried on till the next year, until at compound interest it becomes something very appreciable. At this stage the Sonthal is called upon to defray his debt. This is generally done by means of a sale or mortgage, and very rarely, by a usufructuary mortgage. If the *mahajan* is willing to make an arrangement by which the grain can be repaid in instalments, there is some chance of the debt being repaid ; but if, as more frequently happens, the grain debt is converted into money, then the land will almost inevitably go into the hands of the *mahajan* on the expiry of the mortgage. One hundred per cent. or *dubra* ("double") is the rate of interest charged on grain supplied by the *mahajan* for seed. The *mahajans* are careful enough to be on the spot, where the crop is reaped, so as to ensure repayment of some of the loan at least.

Money debts are less frequent than grain debts. The Sonthal does not need money, except for occasional expenses and for the payment of his rent or of agricultural loans, where one of the *kists* for repayment is fixed in the summer months. A similar running account is kept with the *mahajan*. The rate of interest for money is generally 25 per cent., called *sicca*, and compound interest is charged. In some cases the rate of interest is higher. If the loan is taken in either *Magh*, *Fagun*, *Chait*, *Bysak* or *Jeyt*, the rate charged for these months is 2 annas in the rupee; but if it is not paid till later, 4 annas in the rupee is charged for the winter months, so that the total amount of interest is 6 annas in the rupee. If the loan is taken in either *Asardh*, *Sawan*, *Bhado* or *Asin*, the rate is then 4 annas in the rupee. The rate of interest 2 annas for the summer months is called *korah*, and the rate, 4 annas in the rupee, is then *barsah*. Two other kinds of interest have been found to exist in this area. The first is *chotha*. If the Sonthal urgently requires a small loan of money in *Asin* or *Kartik* (October or November) the *mahajan* will give it to him on condition that he repays it in grain at the following harvest in *Agrahan* or *Pous* (December or January) at a fictitious price fixed by the *mahajan* with one *ari* (about 10 seers) in the rupee as interest. For instance, in one case, a Sonthal borrowed Rs. 2, and the *mahajan* fixed the rate of repayment at seven *aris* in the rupee, with one *ari* as interest in the rupee, whilst the actual price at the time of repayment was three *aris* in the rupee. This rate of interest is not common. The second is *dhurta*. A small loan is taken in *Kartik* (October or November) for sacrifices. Paddy is repaid in *Pous* or *Magh* (January or February) at the proper price with one *ari* in the rupee as interest.

When the Sonthals' debts have passed the stage of the current account and have been turned into money and a document has been executed, the rate of interest charged is supposed to fall, but the statistics of the Sub-Registry office (Appendix II) show that the rate of interest even then lies most commonly between 4 annas and 6 annas in the rupee. Examples of indebtedness will be found in the villages in Appendix I. One startling feature is that every Sonthal has not only one but several *mahajans*.

Where persons have lost all their lands, they are as a rule free from debt, in fact it is regarded as sign of respectability to have a fair amount of debts. It betokens credit. As matters stand at present, the *mahajan* is an absolute necessity. He is in effect the village banker. Labourers have no credit. In Dharmpur [Appendix I(*a*), No. X] where the villagers have lost most of their lands, the indebtedness is very little. Murgadanga [Appendix I(*a*), No. V] affords an example of indebtedness in an intact village, but with only fourth class *dhan* land in it. Arendra and Kusumkandar [Appendix I(*a*), Nos. IX and XVI] are good examples of indebtedness in fairly substantial villages. It is easy to pick out in these villages the persons who will lose their lands because they have mortgaged them. A debt which has been converted into a mortgage is very seldom repaid. Three or four mortgages in a village of 25 houses cannot be regarded as a very small number. As one mortgage is converted into a permanent sale, another appears, and so on, till practically all the good land in the village goes. I am inclined to the opinion that the suppression of debts in this area has not been so great as might be expected.

The following is a statement of the account of one Kuar Manjhi of Kusumkandar taken from the *mahajan* Tinkouri Mandal's book:—

YEAR 1315.

Receipts.	Date.	Grain. Map.	suli.	pies	pawa.	Money. Rs.	A.	P.
1 plum tree valued at Re. 1-2.		6	2	11	1½	4	9	10½
19th Pus 7 maps 4 sulis	*Due according to page 11 of account book for the year 1314.*							
	Payments to Kuar Manjhi—							
	17th Chait	0	4	0	0	...		
	25th Baisack ..	0	2	0	0	.....		
	29th „ ...	0	2	0	0	..		
	13th Jeyt	0	2	2	0	......		
	9th Asadh	0	4	0	0			
	Before this he took ...	0	0	15	0	...		
	16th Asadh ...	0	4	0	0	..		
	Cash taken for the blacksmith ...	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
	23rd Asadh ...	0	4	0	0	....		
	25th „ ...	0	0	5	0	... ..		
	30th „ ...	2	4	0	0	...		
	Measured grain 6 pies of rice valued at grain ..	0	0	14	0	......		
	17th Shraban ...	0	4	0	0	0	4	0
	9th Bhado ...	0	3	0	0	... ..		
	24th „ ...	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
	30th „ ...	0	1	2½	0	valued at 0	8	0
	15th Asin ..	0	1	15	0	.....		
	"Pujati Sobare" ...	0	0	0	0	1 pice.		
	Total ...	12	7	2	1½	6	1	15½
	Interest ...	6	3	11	0¾	1	8	8¾
		19	2	13	2¼	7	10	4
	Repayments, plum tree	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
	Grain	7	4	0	0	....		
	Due ...	11	6	13	2¼	6	8	4

N B —2 pie = 1 seer (*kutcha*), 20 pie = 1 suli, 8 sulis = 1 map and 1 seer (*pucca*) = 2½ seers (*kutcha*)

The debt of Kuar Manjhi is thus about 12 maps, which is about 10 maunds. He started with a debt of 6 maps at the beginning of the year, he took another 6 maps during the year, repaid more than 6 maps during the year, but at the end of the year owed 12 maps, twice what he owed at the commencement. Such are the results of compound interest. The account is also interesting as an example of the inability of the Sonthal to repay a money loan.

82. *Suri, Sadar subdivision.*—I gather from the report of my assistant that the rate of mutation and indebtedness is practically the same in Rajnagar outpost as in the Rampur Hât subdivision. It is in Mohammad Bazar, but it is aggravated by the fact that in some cases the Mostagir is regarded as, and, as already mentioned, has been recorded as a settled raiyat, whilst the other Sonthals are looked upon as under-raiyats. In the village of Dhangalpara the *mahajan* purchaser of the Mostagir's right deliberately defaulted in payment of rent with the intention of having the Sonthal under raiyats dispossessed. Haringpara is another case in point. An auction-purchaser came in, dispossessed all the Sonthals and now the latter cultivate *adhi*. In another case a Banya purchased a hamlet and then proceeded to say that the Sonthals were only "krishans" or labourers on the land, and he won a case about this. Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin found a few villages also in Rajnagar in which the Sonthals had been treated as under-raiyats and

were dispossessed. In the same area he found a few villages in which the Sonthals are only labourers on the land, receiving one-third of the produce as remuneration for cultivating it. In Bolpur where the cultivation is quite recent, the loss of land and rate of mutation is low.

BANKURA

SADDAR SUBDIVISION.

Appendices II(b) and III(b)

YEAR	Sales	Civil Court sales (money and rent decrees).*	Mortgages	Usufructuary mortgages
1906 ...	137	22	147	27
1907	154	25	186	15

83. The above figures have been supplied by the Registrar and the District Judge of Bankura. The figures supplied by the Registrar are not exhaustive of all the documents executed, as a number of simple bonds are not registered. The main features these figures exhibit are that sales in the Civil Courts are small in number compared with other sales, that usufructuary mortgages or temporary transfers are very rare, and that sales nearly equal the number of mortgages, thereby implying that almost all mortgages eventually end in sales which is undoubtedly the case. In the Appendix, examples of many villages have been given showing the very large amount of transfer of lands from Sonthals to Dikkus, which resolves itself merely into transfers to *mahajans*. The Sarenga Mission, it is said, endeavours to prevent transfers in its own villages.

84. *Private sales.*—These sales are almost invariably for grain debts incurred to *mahajans*, converted into money debts They are seldom for cash down, except when the Sonthal is involved in a civil or criminal suit. Private sale to *mahajans* accounts for by far the largest amount of transfer from Sonthal to Dikkus. The statement in Appendix II shows that the price paid is Rs. 10 per bigha or under in over 25 per cent. of the cases, though in every case it is always the raiyat's best land that is sold. But some of the *mahajans* like R. C. Choudhri of Rajahatu [Appendix I(*b*), No. XXIII] prefer to put large sums in their deeds, he obtained a half share of the village for Rs. 1,499 in 1890. There is very little inter-transfer of this description amongst the Sonthals themselves, only a very occasional Sonthal money-lender is to be found. The areas where the least amount of transfer by sale has taken place are the east of Bankura thana and Onda thana. In the first area, this is due to the fact that the *mahajan* is a very small man and is an agriculturist also by profession. But the amount of sale is growing. In Onda it is because the Sonthals have very little land of their own and are said to have cultivated lands *bhagti* all along. In Indpore outpost also a comparatively large number of hamlets exist with little dispossession in them, particularly the eight villages which were found to be intact out of the 32 examined.

By far the largest amount of dispossession has occurred in the comparatively thickly populated Sonthal area in the south-west of the district, where the *mahajan* has practically run riot. The amount of dispossession in the very corner is very remarkable, considering the jungly and broken nature of the country, the *mahajan's* greed has in this case overcome his fear. The amount of transfer varies according to different circumstances. It is generally least in villages where the cultivation is poor, or because (*e.g.*, Sunderpatti) the cultivation is recent or because, as in Susna, the original clearer of the village was a school-master, educated in Midnapore, who was able to cope with the *mahajans*. Both these villages are said to have no Dikkus cultivating in them at all, but in all the 190 villages I examined in Khatra and Raipur thanas, only 12 small hamlets were discovered in which it was said a Dikku had not got any cultivation as yet.

* No distinction was made in the figures supplied

In the northern area, resettlement of the transferred lands is not very common, for the reason already mentioned that most of the money-lenders are by class cultivators. But they do so, if they live in distant villages, or have acquired too large an amount of cultivation to cultivate themselves, or have acquired the interest of so many villagers that it would be difficult for them to obtain direct possession. In the south-western area resettlement of the lands is common, mainly for the reason that the *mahajans* have acquired an unmanageably large amount of land, and owing to the jungles, do not live at the source of their gains. Such resettlement takes the form of a high produce rent [*vide* the cases of Harnagurni and Ledhapokur in the Appendix I(*b*), Nos. IX and XXV]. In the first case over one-half of the village has gone into the hands of *mahajans*, but one-third has been given back on high produce rents, in some cases increased to 20 times the previous rent. In the second case the whole hamlet has gone into the hands of the *mahajan*—proprietor, who has let out the lands on different *sajha* leases, raising the combined rent from Rs. 20-10 to Rs. 31 *plus* 58 maunds, valued at Rs. 116, *i.e.*, the rent has been raised seven fold. Another interesting example of a resettlement is to be found in the village of Rajahatu, where a Sonthal in fighting the *mahajan* proprietor [Appendix I(*b*), No XXIII] finally won the case, but had to sell a fourth share of his land owing to the costs he had incurred, obtaining a resettlement of it at a rate of 72 maunds a year. His rent was thus increased from Re. 1-4 to practically Rs. 144. In this area the *mahajan* is dependent on the Sonthal for the cultivation of the land, but he fixes a produce rent which makes the Sonthal practically his servant on the land. In Tilabad [*vide* Appendix I(*b*), No. X] the rate of *sajha* is 8 maunds a bigha for other villages it has been found to be as much as 11 maunds a bigha, as the good land. To such a rate the Sonthals very much object; they would prefer to cultivate *bhagti*. But the rate varies very much, and many examples will be found in the Appendix. In other cases of resettlement the land is given out *bhagti*. Such cases cannot always be regarded as a resettlement because the land is sometimes changed from year to year and the Sonthal acquires no right to it.

The main dispossession in these villages appears to have begun about the time of the great famine of 1865-66. Since then the amount of transfer to Dikkus has been increasing and increasing, till for want of a better adjective, it can now only be characterised as enormous, particularly in the south-west of the district. Ask a Sonthal how much land in his village has gone into the hands of the *mahajan*, and 8 or 12 annas will not be a surprising answer Examine the village, and occasionally the proportion may appear to be less. but all the best land will be found to have gone and the major part of the remaining rice-land, leaving the Sonthal with a small proportion of the inferior rice land and a large area of *dhangar* uplands, the latter of which he occasionally cultivates. Rajahatu [Appendix I(*b*), No. XXIII] is an example of a large and substantial Sonthal village in which the main dispossession has occurred since 1880. Since 1895, the *mahajan* proprietor admits from his *jamabandis* to having acquired 120 odd bighas of Sonthali land in the village, and to having made 80 bighas *khas*. In fact, I am not at all sure that the proper number is not 200 bighas, but his *jamabandis* require explanation, and I give the smaller number.

85. *Transfers owing to rent decrees.*—The figures supplied by the District Judge do not distinguish between rent and civil suits, but they show that there are comparatively few sales in Court as compared with private sales. This was borne out by the enquiry. Sales for rent are infrequent When a decree for rent has been obtained, the Sonthal borrows from a *mahajan* and repays the amount. Money rents are also small and afford no difficulty in payment. In case of grain rents the *mahajan* proprietor is careful to be on the spot when the crop is reaped and to credit the proceeds of the crop to rent first, leaving the other debts of the Sonthal to accumulate until they are ripe for the purchase of his remaining land.

86. *Transfer by Civil Court decrees.*—These are equally infrequent. The *mahajan* does not find it so very necessary to go to Court to obtain possession of any land. If he does, he either effects a compromise or in over 30 cent. of the cases he obtains an *ex-parte* decree, even although there is a Munsifi at Khatra just on the outskirts of the almost purely Sonthal country in Raipur.

A favourite defence of the Sonthals in this area, doubtless engineered by some mukhtears in Khatra, is to set up a claim that the sale was a *benami* transaction In cases that I have seen, it has not been successful.

87. *Transfers by usufructuary mortgages.*—Attention has already been drawn to the fact, demonstrated by the statements obtained from the Registrar's office and proved by the enquiry, that usufructuary mortgages are rare compared with out and out transfers. This throws an important light on the methods of the *mahajans* and money-lenders. It shows that all he wants is permanent possession of the land, and that he will be satisfied with little else. Take the example of one Jherka Manjhi and his sale of 2 bighas 10 cottahs, sold for Rs. 99 in Goberda [Appendix I(*b*), No. VIII]. He has obtained a resettlement on the moderate terms of eight maunds a year; at the *mahajan's* calculation this is Rs. 16 a year. The money rent is a *bagatelle*, annas 12. At this rate the *mahajan* will recoup himself in about six or seven years for the actual amount of the debt, Rs 99, which itself was arrived at by compound interest at 50 per cent Even allowing him a small amount of interest on his money, Rs. 99, say, 6 per cent., only a small amount, because the land is now his and the risk has gone, the *mahajan* should recoup himself in eight or nine years. Surely a usufructuary mortgage for that period for the principal and interest would have been more equitable than the out-and-out sale the Sonthal was compelled to execute.

88. *Indebtedness.*—As in Birbhum every raiyat has a running account with one *mahajan* or several *mahajans* for grain for domestic purposes. This indebtedness is the first stage leading to the transfer of his land and only ceases when he has lost all his land Examples showing the indebtedness of the raiyats of different villages will be found in the Appendix. There is some reason to believe that the Sonthals have given a more complete account of their debts than they did in Birbhum. They have a more accurate idea of the different kinds of deeds and know a mortgage by the same term. One characteristic is the large number of simple bonds executed in the south-west. Mortgages are very frequent, and, as has already been observed, judging from the figures supplied by the District Judge and the Registrar, in the majority of cases they lead to sales of the mortgaged lands. The total amount due on a mortgage is beyond the Sonthal, and he leaves that unpaid except possibly the interest. Nevertheless a few cases occurred in which a mortgage has been repaid, generally by executing a fresh mortgage or sale in favour of another *mahajan.*

One fact that the villages given in the Appendix illustrate is important, and that is that when a *kistibandi* is made, that is to say an arrangement by which a Sonthal pays off his debt by yearly instalments of grain, the Sonthal generally pays the instalments unless there is an untoward year, as there was two years ago, when there was a scarcity and certain relief measures were adopted. The Sonthal understands a *kistibandi*, he knows how much he has got to pay per year and pays it. If he had his will, he would always execute *kistibandis* for the repayment of his debts.

Another class of loan in this district is an advance taken for the cultivation of lac This is not regarded as a debt, and it is generally repaid in *Bysak*, when the lac is taken from the tree.

The amount of indebtedness shown in the villages in the Appendix indicate that there is likely to be no falling off in the rate of dispossession until all the Sonthals lose all their lands and are reduced to the position of the *mahajan's* serf, which position a large number have already reached But in the south west the *mahajan* will leave the Sonthal just enough *dhangar* land and give him just enough land on a high produce rent to prevent him kicking over the traces altogether and leaving the district. He is a necessity to the *mahajan* in the cultivation of his lands. I do not believe this is an exaggerated view of the situation

The ordinary rate of interest for money is 25 per cent. Other rates such as 2, 3 or 4½ annas per rupee are charged, but are not common. When small loans are taken, the interest is 2 pice per month in the south of Bankura.

The ordinary rate of interest for grain for Sonthals is 50 per cent., but down in the south of Raipur thana, in one village a *mahajan* declared that the ordinary rate was 25 per cent., and that it had been increased on account of

the recent scarcity to 50 per cent. In another village the *mahajans* said the usual rate was 25 per cent. and only occasionally 50 per cent, these *mahajans* gave a different story, and said they had allowed remissions on account of the scarcity. Amongst Sonthals very few cases of interest at 25 per cent. were, however, found, most of the cases were either *satasi* 37½ per cent. or *derhia* 50 per cent. Interest for seed grain is charged at 100 per cent. In all cases compound interest is charged, and the amount made up with the interest on the whole of the year, however few months before the end the loan had been taken

If the total value of the money debt exceeds Rs. 100 or Rs. 200 and a bond is given, the *mahajans* say that the interest is decreased to 12½ per cent. But the statement regarding mortgages (Appendix I) shows that in the large majority of cases the interest charged lies between 25 per cent. and 37½ per cent. The *mahajans* were rather chary of producing the bonds, and in fact on one pretext or another failed to produce them. In Chhatna the Tambolis have the worst reputation, whilst in Raipur there are large grain-dealers, such as Tambolis and Choudhris who rule the grain market, and must have made considerable fortunes out of the Sonthals.

MIDNAPORE

	Sales	Mortgages	Usufructuary mortgages.	Civil Court sales *
1906 ...	332	226	17	14
1907	200	• 191	24	17

Appendices II and III(c)

89. Examples of the state of dispossession in the different areas will be found in the Appendix. So far as the distribution of transfers between private sales, usufructuary mortgages, rent sales and Civil Court sales is concerned, the proportions are practically the same as in Bankura, by far the largest amount of transfer is by private sale to *mahajans* on account of debts already incurred, and the least by way of temporary transfer or usufructuary mortgage or by way of the Civil Court The statements in Appendix II show that the price paid per bigha is also low, by far the largest number of sales being affected at a price below Rs. 20, and half or more than half of these at a rate of Rs. 10 a bigha or below.

90. *Binpur thana.*—The state of dispossession in this thana is akin to that in Raipur in the south of Bankura, where *mahajans* have been able to secure possession of the villages as Mandals. As also in Binpur the transferred land is often let out temporarily on a *sajha* lease varying from 6 kuris to 1¼ aras† per bigha and sometimes more. At the rate at which *mahajans* have hitherto calculated the price of grain, Rs 2 per maund, this works out at between Rs 2·6 and Rs 8 a bigha. Most of the dispossession has occurred in the past, and is getting less frequent now-a-days by reason of the fact that the best lands have now been transferred. In such cases the Sonthals will occasionally say they have lost no land, because the land has been given back on a *sajha* lease, *e g.*, in Asanbani the Sonthals said they lost no land, but it subsequently appeared that many years ago the village had been sold up for rent and a settlement made at 8 kuris per bigha. There are a few small hamlets in which there is little or no dispossession, but in these villages the lands are mortgaged But that dispossession is still going on at by no means a slow rate is shown by the village of Kamarbandi in the Appendix I(*c*), No. I, which affords a good example of transfers in a substantial village, where the Sonthals are more educated and imagine that they know to cope with the *mahajan*. One quarter of the land has gone up to date, and that more has not gone is due to the fact that the Mandali family have so far managed to play off one *mahajan* against another. A reference to this village will, however, show that in a few years a large amount of land will inevitably go into the hands of the village *mahajan*, including the village right itself, one or two Sonthals are even now on the verge of losing their lands at once

East of the Kosye amongst the intact villages under the Raja of Ramgarh the condition of affairs is better. The rate of transfer is less, and this can only

* Includes rent sales
† About 4 maunds

be ascribed to the fact that the *mahajans* have not yet broken down the headman system.

91. *Garhbeta and Salbani.*—Several villages examined by Maulvi Saiyed Muhammad Nasiruddin are given in the AppendixI(*c*). Nos. XI-XX. He reports that in Garhbeta, nearer the plains, the amount of dispossession that has occurred in the past is so great that only a few villages are now to be found in which the descendents of the original clearers cultivate the land their ancestors had cleared, in other villages they are cultivating lands of which they have taken a fresh settlement; but a large proportion of Sonthals are now merely labourers, who have lost all their lands. In Salbani the amount of dispossession appears to be equally large, though the particular villages selected for the Appendix show less. The rate of mutation of lands from Sonthals to Dikkus in these thanas appears to have been aggravated by the facts that they are nearer the plains and more accessable to the *mahajan*, and that the ijardari and mandali tenures were transferable and were transferred to *mahajans* by Sonthals, thus giving the *mahajans* a greater hold over the village. It is true that only 45 villages out of 170 homogeneous villages were counted in which the Sonthal headman's right had been transferred to *mahajans* on account of debts, but doubtless this does not represent the whole proportion of villages held by *mahajans*, and it is sufficiently large to favour the above conclusion.

92. *Jhargram.*—The rate of dispossession in this area is growing. Private sale was formerly uncommon.

93. *Nayabasan.*—If the *jamabandi* figures of this estate are accepted for comparison, it would appear that the area in the hands of the aboriginal raiyats is now 20 per cent. more than it was 25 years ago; that in the hands of the semi-aboriginal raiyats 42 per cent. more, and that in the hands of the non-aboriginal raiyats 9 per cent. more. If the figures of the present record-of-rights are compared with those of the *jamabandi* figures of 25 years ago, the area in the hands of the aboriginal raiyats is now 95 per cent. in excess of what it was then; that in the hands of semi-aboriginal raiyats 145 per cent. more, and that in the hands of non aboriginals also 145 per cent. more All that these figures disclose is therefore that there has been a very large amount of reclamation during the past 25 years and give no clue to what degree the aborigines and semi-aborigines have been losing their lands. From a statement prepared showing the transfers of occupancy right from aborigines and semi-aborigines the following figures are obtained :—

Loss of area* in acres.		From† Aborigines.	From Semi-‡ aborigines.	To Non-aborigines
Since 1291A	...	2,322·19	44 83	1,192 64 (rest *parti*)

* More detailed figures are —

Area in (acres) transferred from—						Total area transferred.	Area (in acres) transferred to—						
Southal	Bhumij	Munda	Mahto	Bhuiya.	Danda Chatra Manjhi.		Southal	Bhumij.	Munda.	Mahto	Bhuiya.	Danda Chatra Manjhi.	Non-aborigines.
2,613·81	1,654 57	16·15	60·66		327·60	4,496·59	1538·90	319·65	6·29	107 14	3	158·29	1,192·64

Area in 1313 in acres (*Jamabandi*)			Area according to record-of-right prepared		
Aborigines.	Semi-aborigines.	Non-Aborigines.	Aborigines.	Semi-aborigines.	Non-aborigines.
9,063	5,8	14,578	14,613	1,499	38,499

† Sonthals, Bhumijes and Mundas.
‡ Kurmi Mahtos, Bhuiyas and Danda Chatra Manjhis.

Compare this with the *jamabandi* figures of 1291—

	Held by Aborigines	Held by semi-aborigines.	Held by non-aborigines.
Area in 1,291 in acres	7,489½	572	13,649½

It can be roughly estimated that at the least 31 per cent. of the lands originally held by Sonthal, Bhumij or Munda occupancy raiyats have gone into the hands of Dikkus. The actual proportion is probably higher as the *jamabandis* contain figures for all classes of raiyats. The detailed figures for semi-aborigines show that Bhuiyas are of no consequence in this respect, that the gains of Mahtos outweigh their losses by transfer, and that the Danda Chatra Manjhis are the chief losers. In considering these figures it must be remembered that the reclaimed land is the worst and the land transferred by the aborigine his best land During the last twenty five years in actual figures reclamation may have outstripped transfers, but this must necessarily cease and there is reason to believe that the end is not very far off.

94. *Rohini.*—The figures for Rohini on the north of the Subarnarekha do not show such a large amount of reclamation as in Nayabasan, if only the *jamabandi* figures for 1299 and 1313 are compared, there has been none. The figures for the record-of-rights, if compared with the previous *jamabandi* figures of 1299, would show a large amount, but this is of litte account as the *jamabandi* figures are probably quite inaccurate. At all events it is clear that the limit of extension of cultivation is much nearer than in Nayabasan south of the Subarnarekha. From other* settlement papers we get the following figures for transfers of lands held by occupancy raiyats.—

	Area transferred in acres since 1299
From aborigines	354 88
From semi-aborigines	131 77
To non-aborigines ...	481 09

Comparing these figures with the *jamabandi* figures for 1299—

Held by—	Area in 1299
Aborigines	2,286½
Semi-aborigines ...	2,467
Non-aborigines	6,447½

we find that in 17 years, at least 15 per cent. of lands held by aboriginal and 5 per cent of land held by semi-aboriginal occupancy raiyats have gone into the hands of Dikkus. In this area the Bhumijes are the most important so far as transfers are concerned, Bhuiyas are of no consequence at all, and Mahtos have to their credit most of the transfers from amongst the semi aborigines†.

* More detailed figures are —

Area (in acres) transferred from—						Total area transferred	Area (in acres) transferred to—						
Sonthal	Bhumij	Munda	Mahto	Bhuiya	Danda Chatra Manjhi		Sonthal	Bhumij	Munda	Mahto	Bhuiya	Danda Chatra Manjhi.	Non aborigines
132 14	206 00	–	158 77	–	23 46	580 43	15 26	25 00		30		14 46	461 09

Area according to *Jamabandi* of 1313 (in acres)			Area according to record of rights recently prepared		
Aborigines	Non-aborigines	Non aborigines.	Aborgines	Semi aborigines	Semi aborigines
2 023½	2,453	6 4[illegible]½	4 0[illegible]	4,078	1,3247

† Detailed figures for every village in Rohini and Nayabasan are to be found in the Appendices attached to Babu Rampada Chatterji's report on Nayabasan and Rohini This in the Director of Land Records office

95. In order to obtain a comparative idea of the amount of dispossession in Gopiballabhpur compared with the amount in the northern areas, I went into the circumstances of a few villages both in Chiara and Belyabera, as well as those given in the Appendix, and I roughly examined the circumstances of some 15 villages in Nayabasan and of 35 others in Nayagram and Khelargram. The general impression I received, which is borne out by the villages in the Appendix, was that the dispossession in this area was not so great as that in the northern areas or in the areas nearer the plains. I found that individual Sonthals or Bhumijes, as I had been informed, would get into the hands of the *mahajans*, and that there is a general transfer of their lands to Dikkus, but that there is not that wholesale dispossession so noticeable elsewhere. One of the main causes appears to be the practical resumability in this neighbourhood of the Mandali tenure, and the fact that the Mandal is practically a servant of the zamindar, collecting his rents, for which he gets a certain amount of remuneration in money. Such a tenure is really not a tenure, and presents no attractions to the *mahajan*, even if the large land-owners of this would suffer his presence as a Pradhan. This they do not, generally speaking, and this is the second cause. The *mahajan* has therefore had very little opportunity of obtaining possession of a village, and of course in large areas like Belyabera and Nayagram, where the Pradhani system has ceased to exist and the villages are now khas, he does not intervene between the proprietor. The third cause is that the *mahajan* avoids the south of the Subarnarekha river with its jungles and wild animals, and leaves the Sonthals to the tender mercies of cultivators like Kurmi Mahtos, who also do *mahajahi*, but to a smaller extent than the Banya proper. In Belyabera and Nayagram, another cause is to be found in the fact that the proprietors,* Babu K. C. Prohoraj and the Nawab of Murshidabad both lend grain, the former at five kuris in the ara ($31\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.), and the latter at 25 per cent. (excluding the $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. that the muharrir takes for weighing the grain). It is presumed that loans are given with discretion. A fifth cause is the lesser fertility of the lands south of Subarnarekha.

In conclusion, I find that though the rate of dispossession in Nayabasan and Rohini is high, it is not so high as in Birbhum, where the Sonthals are on the verge of the purely Dikku area, where reclamation is drawing to a close and where there is no jungle possessing any terrors for the *mahajan*, and not nearly so great as in the thanas of Raipur and Khatra in Bankura, where the Sonthals have been reduced to the status of a raiyat or under-raiyat rack-rented on a large produce rent, or, as in the north-eastern area of the Jungle Mahals in Midnapore, where the Sonthal is being reduced to the position of a labourer.

96. These remarks are not complete without a reference to the facts that verbal transfers are not uncommon in Midnapore, and that the aborigine often hands over to the *mahajan* a blank stamped paper, signed on his behalf, to be filled up when his debts reach an appreciable amount by an agreement to transfer his lands.

97. *Indebtedness.*—Examples of indebtedness will be found in the Appendix Where, as in Binpur thana, in Kamarbandi, [Appendix I(*a*), No 1] the Sonthal has valuable lands to lose, the indebtedness is great, or in a village like Dhangalpara, where their lands have not yet gone, they are mortgaged. In Garhbeta thana, where most of the lands have gone, the indebtedness is small But in Gopiballabhpur, where the amount of dispossession is less than elsewhere, for the very reasons given for the comparatively small rate of mutation of lands there, the indebtedness would also be comparatively small, were it not for one important factor, viz , the recent scarcity. This, particularly in Belyabera and Chiara, has resulted in a very large number of mortgages being executed in favour of the different *mahajans* as well as in favour of the proprietor of Belyabera. The villages selected show, however, that these mortgages are gradually being repaid, where the repayments are to be made in grain. In Belyabera, the proprietor, the tenants informed me, treated them well now, and it is to be hoped that none of the mortgages in his favour will develop into sales. He only lends grain, and has no regular money-lending business.

* I found no evidence of the lands being sold to these proprietors on account of debts, It is alleged that the proprietors do not sell the Sonthals up on this account The enquiry in Babu K C Prohoraj's estate was however very slight, This is the landlord referred to at the end of paragraph 8. *Vide*, however, page 40.

The following is a specimen of a Sonthal's account from the Belyabera books :—

Receipts.	Expenditure.	Grain for food A. K. M. P.	Grain for seed.	Total grain. A. K. M. P.
No. 38—22nd January 2 kuris man 1 3½ pai	Arrears of current account	6 6 2 3	...	6 6 2 3
	Arrears of former kistibandi	5 11 3 0½	...	5 11 3 0½
	Toatal ...	12 2 1 3½	......	12 2 1 3½
	Remitted ..	0 2 1 3½	...	0 2 1 3½
	Total	12 0 0 0	. ...	12 0 0 0
	Kistbandi —			
	Year 1316	3		... ..
	„ 1317	3	...	.
	„ 1318 ...	3	.	...
	„ 1319 ...	3	.. ...	....
		12		
	Total loans given during current year .	5 4 0 0	1 1 0	6 5 0 0
4 Konas = 1 pai 4 Pais = 1 man 4 Mans = 1 kuri 16 Kuris = 1 ara (approximately 3 maunds 8 seers)	Total	17 4 0 0	1 1 0	18 5 0 0
	Interest for grain for food at five kuris per ara, and for seeds at one ara per ara (in 18-5 12 aras are *kistbandi* and 6-5 current loans)	1 10 1 0	1 1 0	2 11 1 0
	Total ...	18 14 1 0	2 2 0	21 0 1 0

Tho account was closed in 1315A, 7-14-0-3½ has been repaid subsequently, but no payment was made in 1315 as there was a scarcity in that year.

As an instance of how a *mahajan* can run up an account even at a comparatively small rate of interest, *i.e*, 25 per cent., the following is taken from a plaint brought by a *mahajan* against a Sonthal in Binpur thana.—

		A.	K.	S.
Original debt	..	10	0	0
Interest for 1310	...	2	8	0
Interest for 1311	...	2	8	0
	Total ..	15	0	0
Repaid in 1311	...	2	0	0
	Remainder ...	13	0	0
Interest for 1312	...	3	4	0
	Total ..	16	4	0
Interest for 1313	...	4	1	0
	Total ..	20	5	0
Repaid in 1313	...	1	0	0
	Remaindor ...	19	5	0
Interest for 1314	...	4	13	2
	Total ...	24	2	2
Interest for 1315	...	6	0	4
	Total ..	30	2	6
Interest for 1316	...	7	8	4
	Total ...	37	11	2
Repaid in 1316	...	1	0	0
	Total ...	36	11	2

8 seers = 1 kuri.
16 kuris = 1 ara.

The Sonthal orginally owed 10 aras; he repaid 4 aras; he now owes 36 aras. As *ex parte* decree and his land will go.

The subject of the indebtedness of the aboriginal has been receiving attention in Nayagram (Gopiballabhpur thana), and Mr. J. B. Wood, the Manager, hopes, with the permission of the Nawab of Murshidabad, to start agricultural banks in that estate.

The rate of interest varies. The 50 per cent. rate for current loans of grain is common, but not quite so frequent as it is in Birbhum or Bankura. In the north-west of the district, in the more remote areas, it is more common and has been generally raised to this rate on account of the recent scarcity, though it was common enough before. But nearer the plains in thanas Salbani and Garhbeta the rate is more usually 25 per cent. In Jambuni it is either 37½ per cent. or 50 per cent. In the south in Gopiballabhpur, it is generally 50 per cent., the practical minimum is 6 kuris in the ara (16 kuris), or 37½ per cent., 5 kuris in the ara and 4 kuris in the ara are mainly confined to the Belyabera proprietor and the Nawab, respectively. Cases have been found in the north of the district of interest at 10 kuris per ara. For seed loans 100 per cent. is universal. Compound interest is always charged.

Small money loans are usually given at two pice a month per rupee or 37½ per annum. But in Jambuni the rate of interest for a loan below Rs. 15 is reported to be usually one anna in the rupee per mensem For larger sums the interest is less. In the south in Gopiballabhpur interest as high as 50 per cent. is sometimes charged for small money loans.

As usual, the indebtedness of the Sonthal is mainly for grain, and when the debt is converted into a mortgage which he is to repay in money, his chance of repayment has gone. So long as it is in grain, the chances of repayment are more favourable. By far the largest proportion of these mortgages are executed with a rate of interest of 24 per cent., or above, and about three-fourths of these at a rate of interest above 37½ per cent. (*vide* Appendix II). The high rate of interest has naturally an effect on the ultimate amount of dispossession, but it is the fact that it is not simple interest, but compound interest, that kills.

In the north-west of the district there are complaints that the *mahajans* get sales executed when an agreement has been made for a usufructuary mortgage, and in the south Mr. J. B. Wood reports that sales are occasionally executed when the Sonthal only intended to execute a mortgage. Complaints of a similar nature were received in Birbhum. There is no doubt something in this, and it is very important that Registrars should explain documents to Sonthals when registering them. Page 92 (Recommendation No 11.)

There are two minor reasons for the indebtedness of the Sonthal in the south. The first Mr. J B. Wood reports is the systematic extortion by the small excise officials who for a consideration allow illicit home-brewing or distillation. The second is the extortion by the zamindari peons when the Sonthal is found cutting *sál* trees or is allowed to cut them with the peon's connivance.

BALASORE

98 The rate of mutation is rather similar to that in the south of Midnapore but is growing. Instances of transfers will be found in the villages in the Appendix

99. *Private sale.*—This does not appear to have been very prevalent twelve years ago, but is now growing. Verbal transfers are occasionally made, and the Sonthals have a practice, which also exists in Midnapore, of handing the *mahajans* a stamped paper blank except for their signature.

The *amla* of the 4-anna share in Fatehabad pargana are making use of their position to get the lands of the Sonthals into their own hands by *mahajani*. The Sonthals themselves do not distinguish between the *amla* and the estate, and they were rather bitter against the *amla* for compelling them to execute documents for the loans they had taken.

100. *Civil Court sales for money or rent.*—As in other districts, such sales are not very common.

101. *Usufructuary mortgages.*—These are common now-a-days, though not common about 12 years ago There is a far greater amount of transfer comparatively by usufructuary mortgage in this area than in any of the other districts. These usufructuary mortgages are, however, commonly only for the interest; the principal stands very little chance of repayment, so that they are to all intents and purposes permanent transfers Occasionally the land is given back to the Sonthal *bhagti*

102. *Indebtedness.*—The number of mortgages in the villages show that the amount of indebtedness in this area is large, and is growing despite the poverty of the land. As usual, the Sonthals have all to take paddy loans during the year, and the majority were still indebted in March after the annual payments had been paid. The prevailing rate of interest for grain is locally 50 per cent., but a few money-lenders in Midnapore lend grain at 37½ per cent. In some cases the rate is 37½ per cent, if the Sonthal takes the grain to the *mahajan* in repayment, but if the *mahajan* comes for it, he charges 50 per cent. interest for his trouble Small money loans are given at a rate of one-anna per rupee, and larger sums at half-anna per rupee per month. The rate of interest charged by the *amla* in the 4-anna share of the Fatehabad pargana is 31¼ per cent. Compound interest is charged on all grain loans as usual.

Owing to the small number of Sonthals in this district, I did not ask the Registrar or District Judge to have returns prepared showing the number of mortgages, Civil Court sales, etc.

GENERAL

103 *General causes of loss of land and indebtedness.*—From the Sonthal's point of view, he loses his land because he is uneducated and submissive, and the *mahajan* takes advantage of his ignorance to cheat him out of his land by sharp practice This is the case, but it is not the whole truth Sympathetic observers also recognise that drink and thriftlessness complete the main causes. Only occasionally have the Sonthals admitted to losing their lands, because their ancestor frequented the grog-shop too much, and it is not from their statements that I could deduce this conclusion. But it is so patent a fact that it needs no proof.

Another cause to which the Sonthals ascribe the loss of their lands is the breaking down of the intact village system. Intact villages as a rule have disclosed less dispossession than broken villages. It is however difficult to say to what extent this cause operates, because a broken village *ipso facto* generally denotes a more advanced state of dispossession. But when a *mahajan* obtains possession of a village, it is entirely at his mercy. There is not the slightest doubt that the rate of dispossession is greatest in areas like the south-west of Bankura or the north-west of Midnapore, where *mahajans* have been able to secure the headman's right.

Another minor cause which has possibly operated to some extent is the loss of *man* lands formerly held by village officials. The wise forefathers of the Sonthals, when they invented the village communal system, doubtless intended to form each village into a self-reliant unit which could cope with the outside world. In their wisdom they, however, remembered that each village official, though a Sonthal, was still a human being, and had, like the vast majority of human beings, to be paid for his services. They therefore decided that the official should get some lands rent-free for his services But now-a-days this rent-free land has all but disappeared. There is thus every probability that the village officials, not being properly paid, have ceased to regard many of the affairs of any individual one of them in the village as a matter that concerned the whole village, and have reduced their duties to a minimum compatible amount of rice-beer or number of hens they receive for the services they must perform. This I think is a fact. These officials have, therefore, possibly ceased to voice the desire of the village community to keep out the Dikku, and the Sonthal is allowed to live and to sell his land as he likes. I am indebted for this or rather a similar theory, to a record in the Settlement Office, Sonthal Parganas. The idea is fascinating, but it is difficult to say how much there is

in it. The causes of the Sonthal's indebtedness or of the loss of his lands can be classified as follows:—

External.	Internal.
(1) *Mahajans* sharp practice.	(1) Drink
(2) *Mahajan* headmen.	(2) Thriftlessness.
(3) Zamindari sharp practice (to a much less extent, except when the zamindar is a *mahajan*).	(3) Want of education.
(4) Loss of own lands, and breaking down of the intact village.	(4) Submissiveness.

It is possible to legislate against the external evils. Internal cause No. (4) can be turned into self-reliance by maintaining villages intact. Internal cause No. (2) can be partially eradicated by removing internal cause No. (3). No. (1) can be partially cured by taking away the temptation to go to the liquor-shop. It is hopeless to expect to eradicate it.

CHAPTER V.

Civil Court Proceedings.

(*Terms of the Reference No. IV.*)

104. I have utilised the figures (*vide* Appendix III) obtained from the different District Judges for Chapter IV, and very little remains to be said in this chapter, as the examination of Civil Court proceedings was to be on the lines of the statements in the Appendix. These figures must be received with caution. I am doubtful whether they are any use for the comparison of districts.

BIRBHUM

105. Besides the large number of *ex-parte* decrees obtained agaist the Sonthals, the most noticeable feature is that in 24 per cent. of the cases brought against Sonthals, the interest of the Sonthals has been sold. This is very remarkable, as compared with the Sadgops, in which the figure is 9 per cent. It will be observed that a large number of decrees against the Sadgops also are *ex-parte*. I selected the cultivating caste of Sadgops for comparation in Rampur Hât subdivision, as they are a Hindu cultivating caste who bulk largely in the population of this subdivision.

BANKURA.

106. An examination of different villages disclosed the fact that the Dikku was not uniformly successful in the cases he brings, particularly in cases brought to increase rents. The figures show that the Sonthals, Bhumijes and Bauris, in a large proportion of cases have *ex-parte* decrees passed against them, and the number of cases in which the Bauris have been sold up, as compared with the total number of cases brought, would appear to indicate that their position is somewhat analogous to that of the Sonthals.

The percentage of cases in which the right, title and interest of the Sonthal has been sold is less than that in Birbhum; it is only 13 per cent.

MIDNAPORE.

107. The percentage of cases in Midnapore in which the right, title and interest of the Sonthals has been sold is smaller than in either Birbhum or Bankura. It is only between 7 and 8 per cent of the total number of cases brought. But compared with the figures for Kurmis, in which cases the percentage is 2 per cent., it is large. If these statistics are accurate, whereas in about 35 per cent. of the cases decrees against Sonthals are *ex-parte*, in the case of Kurmis the percentage is 46 per cent.

108. The Sonthals contest 24 per cent. of the cases and the Kurmis 20 per cent. The Sonthals compromise 22 per cent. of the cases and the Kurmis 16 per cent. The figures for Bhumijes are of little practical use.

GENERAL.

109. *Ex-parte* decrees seem equally common amongst all classes for which figures have been supplied. The figures for appeals, I have omitted, as of little practical use. The Dikku can appeal, and does appeal up to the High Court. I have not heard of a Sonthal appealing to that extent. He cannot afford it, nor can he afford to defend himself there. It would be more equitable Page 9? if appeals and applications for revisions in all but criminal cases were not (Recommendation No 12) allowed to go higher than the District Judge in cases brought by or against aborigines, unless the District Judge certified that the aborigines were only nominally a party, and therefore the case was a proper one to go before the High Court. This question might be considered in connection with the Bill proposed in Chapter XIV. Page 82

CHAPTER VI.

Arbitrary Eviction.

(*Terms of the Reference No. V.*)

BIRBHUM.

110. Arbitrary eviction is not prevalent. There are very many complaints that the Sonthals have been arbitrarily evicted, but few of them would bear examination. The zamindars and *mahajans* have been very careful to observe the law. There have already been a series of agitations by the Sonthals, resulting in two settlements, and there is no reason to believe that this form of oppression exists to any particular extent now. Of course there are the usual cases of boundary and land disputes, and probably a few of the complaints of arbitrary eviction are true; but to say that it is prevalent would be, I think, quite beside the mark. A settlement can however only disclose to what extent it is prevalent. One form that once existed is the following. A proprietor would, when giving fresh lease of a village to a Mostagir, cut off portions of it as *salami* for his own benefit. There were a few complaints made of this in Rampur Hât subdivision which it was very difficult to check But it has been apparently more prevalent in the Rajnagar outpost.

111. Another form is the settlement of reclaimed land with some person other than the person who reclaimed it, because the latter refused to pay the rent demanded. The proprietor presumably, as the law at present stands, has the right to do this Complaints were made against the Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud that he was in the habit of arbitrarily evicting the tenant, specific instances were, however, wanting. On enquiry into one case, it appeared that the Sonthal cultivated some land under Mr. Skrefsrud as a service holding for doing some missionary. work in a village other than his own. He got into a tangle with a woman Mr. Skrefsrud heard of it. The Sonthal heard that Mr. Skrefsrud had heard of it. He promptly fled to his original village. The Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud is quite strong enough to arbitrarily evict, but he denies that he does it, and there is no proof that he does.

112. A third form that exists is the dispossession of Sonthals after a sale for rent of a whole village on the ground that the Sonthals are the under-raiyats of the Sonthal whose village was sold. This is not prevalent in the Rampur Hât subdivision where their rights as occupancy-raiyats are secured, but in the part of Suri where the Mostagir is regarded as a raiyat, specific instances of this have been found. The fact that, whether raiyat or under-raiyat, they have or should have occupancy-rights has been ignored.

113. Rampur [Appendix I(a), No XV] is an instance of a village where the Sonthals have been arbitrarily evicted from their uplands on a large scale.

BANKURA.

114. Numerous complaints were made of arbitrary eviction, but a few minutes' cross-examination generally broke down the theory. It is unnecessary to adopt illegal methods with the Sonthals. An *ex-parte* decree in Court or a sale of the Sonthal's land by a registered deed is all that is sufficient and both are

easy to arrange. There exist, or existed however, some subtle forms of arbitrary eviction in which the landlord puts forward a claim as of right. They are:—

(1) *Eviction on the ground that Sonthals are under-raiyats.*—When a Sonthal headman has been sold up for the rent of aportion of a mauza, the new proprietor assumes at once that the former is a raiyat and takes possession of the land of the other Sonthals whom he regards as under-raiyats.

Cases of this description are reported from Chhatna and Taldangra; in the latter area it is reported that the raiyats of the headman are generally regarded as under-raiyats. In Raipur and Khatra, the form of this that I found was the common habit of a headman selling his right to a *mahajan*, and the *mahajan* trying to obtain possession of his co-sharers' interest also. This particular form is, however, one of the usual incidents of *mahajani* sharp practice. It has not, however, met with universal success in Raipur and Khatra, because the headman's right is regarded as divisible.

(2) *Arbitrary eviction on termination of a temporary lease.*—On the one hand the zamindar asserts that the Sonthals have cultivated beyond the boundaries of the land that he gave them, and, on the other side, the Sonthals assert that they have not. In the end the proprietor gives a fresh *patta*, andcuts off portions of the cultivation. Sometimes he does this on the ground that it is *salami* for the fresh lease. There is a village, just south of Khatra, in which this is at present the bone of contention between the landlord and the Sonthal headman.

(3) *Eviction by a new proprietor.*—Isolated instances have been discovered of a new proprietor coming in and trying to set up a claim to direct possession of land on the ground that the Sonthals were mere tenants-at will and cultivated the land *bhagti*. Such a claim is helped by the practice, common in Khatra and Raipur, of making verbal (*mukhjubani*) settlements; the proprietors allege that the Sonthals having no *patta* have no right, and therefore are not entitled to receipts But I am glad to report that the Dikku is not universally successful in such cases in the Civil Courts. Circumstances are, however, so much in favour of the Dikku being able to establish such a claim, that it is quite possible that cases of this description are more common than I think.

(4) *Arbitrary eviction from "man" lands.*—From Chhatna there are many complaints that *man* lands were resumed by the acquirer of the headman's right very many years ago on the ground that the Sonthals paid no rent for them. It is doubtful whether this form exists at all at present in any area, and this is probably due to the difficulty of distinguishing *man* lands from rented lands, as well as to the fact that such lands have practically ceased to exist. Page 19

MIDNAPORE.

115. The Kanungo, Maulvi Ekramuddin, found that arbitrary eviction had been very prevalent in the remote north-west of Binpur thana, but was getting less prevalent every day. If a Sonthal did not pay his rent or his debts to a tenure-holder, the tenure-holder would tell him to leave some of his land and the Sonthal would do so. The Kanungo states that the Dikku Mandals he interrogated were unable to give any satisfactory explanation of this. The Raja of Ramgarh has obtained land in almost all his villages by the favourite method of taking some of the land as *salami* on giving* a new settlement of the village. There are some uninvestigated complaints that the Nayagram tahsildars make arrangements to transfer portions of a Sonthal's *jote* in order to defray the arrears of rent or debts due by the latter.

* Received after the close of the enquiry, *vide* footnote also on page 34.

For the rest, most of the complaints of arbitrary evictions, so often made by the Sonthals, resolve themselves into *ex-parte* decrees or evictions by a legal process which to the Sonthal was not justified.

BALASORE

116. So far as I can gather, arbitrary eviction is occasionally indulged in by the *amla* of the 4 anna share in the Fatehabad pargana. One case is rather interesting. Dukhia's mother owed the Naib some money. She went to repay it The Naib's wife was on the point of death, so she was told to come later. By the time she came again, the Naib's wife was dead. The Naib promptly accused the Sonthal woman of having killed his wife by witchcraft, and fined her Rs 24. She could not pay it, so had to give six bighas instead. The Naib was questioned, but he could not deny it. In another case a cook belonging to the estate contrived to oust a Sonthal from 10 cottahs of land. I am informed that this is to be returned.

GENERAL.

117. In dealing with the subject of arbitrary eviction, I have not taken into account evictions from land let out on a temporary lease to a raiyat who is already a settled raiyat of the village. That class of eviction is probably prevalent, because it is doubtful whether the Sonthal recognises that he is entitled to occupancy rights in such land, when it is not the proprietor's private land. Should a settlement be undertaken, a great deal of good might possibly be done by securing the Sonthals in the possession of these lands alleged to be given in a temporary lease; though probably, particularly in Bankura, a number of such Sonthal raiyats will be suppressed by the *mahajan* proprietors.

CHAPTER VII

RENTS

(Terms of the Reference No. VII)

BIRBHUM

118. *Rampur Hat subdivision*—Practically there is only one proprietor of any importance, Babu P. C. Pando of Pakaur, who has not increased the rents of his villages. That the others have done so is due to the fact that reclamation is still going on, and fresh rent is assessed for the new land. The old land is the lower and more fertile land, and the new land is the higher and less fertile land, so that it may very well be assumed that the new land is worse than the old. Yet rents show that, in the majority of cases, the rate of rent is higher for the poorer new land than for the old land. The reason of this is that the proprietors want to raise the Sonthals' rate of rent to that paid by the Dikkus. A Sonthal pays a much lower rate of rent than a Dikku, because he has made the land himself, and is entitled to privileged rates accordingly by the custom of the country. What these rates should be were fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha in 1881 in his settlement. They are :—

	Per bigha As
First class paddy land	15
Second " " " . .	10
Third " " " ...	6
Fourth " " "	4
First " upland ...	6
Second " " "	2
Homestead land	Free.

119. Partab Chandra Choudhry's villages afford a most striking example of how rents can be increased. His villages were settled by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha in 1881, but last year Babu P. C Choudhry has given a fresh lease of his villages to Mostagirs, after a measurement, at a fixed rent of 8 annas per bigha. Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's rates generally work out at about 4 annas

per bigha, so that the rate of rent have been practically doubled. This has been done regardless of the fact that the settled raiyat was entitled to hold his original land at the rates fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, subject to certain restrictions, none of which cover the case of doubling a rate of rent. But not only has the rate of rent been doubled, but the actual rent is quadruple, and more than quadruple what it was in Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's time, *e g.* —

	Area 1881	Rent 1881	Present Area.	Present Rent
	Bighas.	Rs	Bighas.	Rs
Chandernagore ..	111 0 5¼	21 12 10	217 2 0	108 8 16
Murgadanga (No II) ..	9 1 12	1 15 6	32 6 0	16 2 8

120. The *kists* are paid in *Asin* and *Paus*. The Sonthal generally has to borrow money from a *mahajan* to pay the rent in *Asin*. Even in intact villages such as Murgadanga (No. I) *vide* Appendix I (*a*). No. V], the rate of rent for excess cultivation is much higher, *e g.*, for 30 bighas the total rent is Rs. 21, whilst for the whole village of 198 bighas the rent is Rs. 40. The rate of rent for the new land would make it second class land, and as only 10 bighas of third class rice land existed in the village in 1881 (the rest was land of a lower class), it may very well be assumed that this is not the case. Digalpahari [Appendix I (*a*), No. VII] shows a gradual increase in the rate of rent from annas 5½ a bigha to annas 7¼ A mukhtear bought the village of [Bajpara Appendix I (*a*), No XII], and raised the rents from Rs 18 to Rs. 93.

121. Instances could be multiplied of cases where the rent has been arbitrarily increased, and for some of these a reference to the villages in Appendix may be made. Others are—

NAME	Previous area	Previous rent	Present area	Present rent.	REMARKS
	B K D	Rs. A P	B. K D	Rs A P	
Kanchpahari ...	299 0 0	53 11 11	284 0 0	79 0 0	Till 3 years ago
Mohibona ...	173 3 16¼	30 10 11	......	45 15 19	
Mosnia ...	198 15 0	30 0 3	......	.....	An increase of about 8 annas in the rupee is said to be on the *tapis*
Adalpahari .	304 0 0	157 12 16	350 14 0	201 0 0	
Mamda	161 14 1	38 7 8	....	61 0 0	
Murgadanga ..	330 0 0	169 9 2	284 15 0	188 0 0	Till about 8 years ago.
Kirtipur ...	128 13 14	28 7 14	153 13 14	61 7 14	A *patta* recently granted for 25 bighas at Re 1 a bigha
Tildanga ...	405 11 13	160 13 4½	441 14 0	213 13 0	
Arendra ...	421 14 5	177 11 15	345 10 0	209 0 0	
Tentbandi ...	...	75 0 0	..	261 0 0	
Burtola ..	.	19 0 0	.	59 0 0	
Dhokuhatu ...	.....	106 0 0	..	297 0 0	
Dhanpara ...	......	31 0 0	...	108 0 0	

122. In the above list of villages there has only been a moderate increase in the rent (with the exception of the last four). In such cases without a measurement and classification of lands, it is difficult to decide whether the increase in rent is moderate or not. In Adalpahari, however, the excess land about 50 bighas was assessed at about Rs 50, according to which it would be first class rice land, which is not the case at all. A similar result is seen in Kirtipur. In one area, as in the villages of Saldoha and Sealdonga [*vide* Appendix I (*a*), No. VI] a very curious method of assessing rent exists. An entirely fictitious rent is fixed, and then a large remission from this is made, and the remainder realised. As fresh cultivation is measured, a fictitious amount is added to the original fictitious amount, and another large remission made. It is to be hoped that no Court will mistake the fictitious amount for the real rent. Luckily in a

number of these cases the Sonthals can prove by receipts that they have paid the same remainders for 20 years In Murarai thana, Sonthals who cultivate land, which was not made by them, pay a higher rate of rent for that land. Dikkus pay much higher rates. For example, some Dhangars were found to be cultivating 17 bighas on a rental of Rs 43. In a few cases the Sonthals have objected to pay the increased rents, and are depositing them in the Civil Courts. Receipts are generally granted, but the areas are not written on them in a large number of cases.

123. In the Mollarpur Pargana, Munshi Nundji also fixed rates of rent for Sonthal lands, in 1892. These were slightly different from those fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha. They were—

	Per bigha. Rs. A.
First class paddy land ...	1 0
Second " " " ...	0 12
Third " " " ...	0 9
Fourth " " " ...	0 6
Uplands ...	0 4
Homestead land ...	Nil

124. But the excess land is being treated here by the Mohant of Mollarpur in exactly the same way as it is elsewhere. These fixed rates are being ignored. In Jetia I found that the amin was assessing new land as follows —

	Rs. A
Paddy land ...	1 4
Uplands ...	0 6
Good prospective paddy land ...	1 4
Fair " " " ...	1 0

125. One field of 7 bighas 13 cottahs, which was examined and could at the utmost have only been half third class and half second class, was assessed at Rs 9-9. Assuming that it was even all second class, the rent should not have been more than Rs 5-10. The landlord's amin explained that he regarded it as first class land, because it was the best land the Sonthals held! The Sonthals also brought a complaint that the amin had been assessing to new rents land already in their khatians, on the ground that it was *parti* at the time of the settlement in 1892. This was found to be incorrect, though the land just being assessed, had undoubtedly been made several years ago. The Mohant's men have been collecting three years rent for the excess land. By this means, according to the Bengal Tenancy Act, it becomes a fixed rent

126. The Mohant was given an opportunity of explaining the high rate of rent for new land. But all the information that was forthcoming was that Bengalis pay higher rates for similar lands, an answer that begs the question entirely as Sonthals are entitled to privileged rates in this area. He has measured increased area in Raipur, Jetia and Polasboni. According to his own statement, new cultivation is being assessed at the following rates —

	Per Bigha. Rs. A
First class paddy land ...	1 8
Second " " " ...	1 4
Third " " " ...	1 0
Fourth " " " ...	0 12
Upland ...	0 6

127. Homestead lands are also being charged for at 4 annas and 6 annas per bigha, which is also against the recognised custom of the area.

The rates in the last paragraph are very much in excess of those fixed by Munshi Nundji, and they are practically the rates fixed by him for excess land in Bengali holdings.

The subject of rents in the Rampur Hât subdivision cannot be finished without a reference to the *jalkar* charged by the Revd. L. O. Skrefsrud

There is a *band* which he has built in Aturia and for which he charges all the villagers 4 annas in the rupee of rent *jalkar*. The villagers say that all the Sonthals have to pay *jalkar* whether they benefit from the tank or not

This is substantially borne out by the rent-roll of the village, though one raiyat was produced who did not pay the *jalkar*. The Sonthals are now apprehensive that a further *jalkar* will be charged to everybody for another tank in another village.

128. The following statement of some rents and areas of some villages in Maureswar thana chosen at random for comparison shows both the tendency of rents to be considerably enhanced and the loss in lands:—

Serial number.	Village	Landlord.	Past land of Sonthals, as shown in settlement papers of 1892			Past rent of Sonthals, as shown in settlement papers			Present rent of Sonthals, as shown in landlord's papers.			Present rent of Sonthals, as shown in landlord's papers		
			B	K.	D	Rs	A	Gs.	B	K.	D.	Rs.	A	Gs
1	Agoa ...	Mohant Bhagwan Dass.	676	6	12	322	11	0	494	13	8	300	1	6½
2	Rampur ...	A tenure-holder	609	18	0	273	1	5	224	17	0	315	8	0
3	Ghaga .	Ditto ...	174	17	0	141	13	7	148	1	12	130	10	0
4	Paobami	Ditto	89	6	12	27	5	5	64	2	0	73	4	0
5	Raipur ..	Mohant Bhagwan Dass	122	9	0	55	3	12¾	62	2	8	40	13	12½
6	Nimpahari	Ditto .	188	12	4	70	1	17¾	239	17	4	101	4	16
7	Kalaipahari	Ditto ..	107	19	8	35	7	6½	75	9	12	67	7	15
8	Polashboni	Ditto	940	19	13	409	12	7	820	10	8	421	3	2

The figures for Rampur are extraordinary, but are correct. *Vide* Appendix I(*a*) No. XV

129. *Sadder subdivision*—The area in Suri differs in respect of rents in that there has been no settlement, except in a few villages belonging to the Maharaja of Burdwan. In the other villages, the total rent of the village has been increased from time to time by the proprietor after a rough appraisement or a measurement, fresh *pattas* being given on such occasions In one village of Karanjabani, there was an increase from Rs. 9 to Rs.55 in the rental of the village after a measurement in 1311 The receipts show a rental of Rs. 110, with a remission of Rs. 55. The area is 207 bighas 7 cottahs. The Hetampur Raj also has increased the rents of its villages. In Moralpur the rent was first Rs. 56-10, then Rs. 80, and now Rs 171, and in Kusumkandar it was first Rs. 32, then Rs. 45, and now Rs. 85. Without measurements it is impossible to say how far these rates are wrong. What is clearly wrong is the large sudden increase, whether the actual increase be justified by the increased cultivation or not.

In the Burdwan Khas Mahal settlement rents were increased on account of increased cultivation, but this was done gradually. For example in Moldanga the rent of 242 bighas 2 cottahs 10 dhurs was increased from Rs. 50 to Rs. 88-11-3, by an arrangement that Rs. 60 should be paid for three years, Rs. 70 for the next three years, and then Rs. 88-11-3

In Bolpur, Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin reports that the old rate of rent varied between 8 annas and to 12 annas per bigha, and in many cases it has now been increased to Re. 1 and Re. 1-12 a bigha, but where it was originally fixed at Re. 1 a bigha that rate has been maintained.

Areas are not always mentioned in the receipts, and some cases have been found in which no receipts are granted.

BANKURA

130. It has been stated that when a *mahajan* has obtained possession of a village, he has generally frightened or persuaded the villagers into executing registered documents for their lands at enhanced rents. Such a statement would probably be true of the state of affairs some years ago, and was probably true

then in the case of almost every village which went into the hands of a *mahajan*, *e.g.*, Harnagurni, where the rate of rent per rek was increased from Rs. 3 to Rs. 7. But it is not literally true of the present day, though recent instances have been found in which the *mahajans* have increased the rents. The *mahajan*-proprietors find it difficult to prove their right to an increase of rent in Court, and many instances have been found in which they have been unsuccessful. They find it more advantageous to involve the Sonthal in debts, then buy his land and resettle it at a high produce rent.

131. The method of raising rents by measuring increased cultivation and assessing the increase to rent is not very prevalent. In some of the villages of Messrs. Gisborne and Company, rents have been increased in this way. In one village, Pindagadia [Appendix I (*b*), No. XXIV] an enterprising Sonthal headman had measured the lands in the village, but had been unsuccessful in raising the rent in the Civil Court.

132. *Jangalburi* tenures, from their nature, and also Mandali tenures are liable to increase in the rent, *e.g.*, a *patta* of 1873 for Ruktagarua shows that the rent from 1280—1284 B was originally *nil*, and it was then assessed at Rs. 7. It is now Rs. 23 In Tilaikanali, a *patta* was given in 1888 with rent at Rs. 20 *plus* half the *sál* cut. The rent had originally been Rs. 4. In Polasbani, a *patta* was given in 1889 for a term of years on a rental of Rs. 21. Subsequently, in 1900, a *mokurari patta* was given to all Sonthals on a rental of Rs. 74, eight pounds of *jansha*,* eight seers *gundli*, eight seers *bajra*, one seer *ghee*, one seer *kag* and eight seers *kalai*. The rent had been raised to Rs. 60 in between But with no measurements, it is difficult to say that the increase in rent was not perfectly justifiable; at all events there has been no excitement amongst the Sonthals concerning the increase. But in a very large number of villages, omitting the change to a produce rent after a sale rents have not been increased for many years. This is almost universally the case where there has been no recent change of proprietors.

133. Comparison between past and present rent-rolls was practically impossible, as the tenure-holders in the majority of cases said that rent-rolls did not exist. This, judging from the haphazard way in which receipts sometimes are and sometimes are not granted, and the fact that measurements are not, as a rule, given on the receipts, is possibly the case. Those that I saw were of little value. The rents in some Ghatwal villages in Chhatna were compared with the Ghatwali *chithas* prepared during the Ghatwal settlement, and the rent was found to be the same. In one Ghatwal village that has been sold, the purchaser is trying to increase the rent.

134. On the whole, it can safely be said that a noticeable increase in the rates of rent is not a characteristic of the Sonthals in the Bankura district, *except when there has been a change of title in the land*. The exception is a very big one. When a *mahajan*-proprietor buys land from Sonthal, he proceeds to resettle it with the latter at a very highly-increased combined money and produce rent, or simply a produce rent, *e.g.*, Jherka Manjhi, of Goberda [Appendix I (*b*), No. VIII], sold 2 bighas 10 cottahs rented at 12 annas in Goberda. He got it back at a rent of 8 maunds, valued by the *mahajan* at Rs. 16. This, however, is moderate. In Tilabad [Appendix I (*b*), No X] a *sajha* rental is 8 maunds a bigha for good land, and in other villages *sajha* at 11 maunds a bigha has been found. In Ledhapakur [Appendix I (*b*), No. XXV] the rent has been increased from Rs. 20-10 to Rs. 31 *plus* 58 maunds, *i e.*, to about Rs. 147, taking the *mahajans* standard value of the maund at Rs. 2. Many instances will be found in the Appendix. Receipts are not always given. When no settlement has been made in writing, the proprietor does not consider it is incumbent on him to grant receipts. He maintains the Sonthal has no right or is merely an under-raiyat. The Sonthals are rather lucky in that there have not been many untoward results. I am inclined to believe the formation of a Munsiffi at Khatra has had a good effect. This system of rack-renting is a characteristic particularly of Khatra and Raipur thanas. Several examples of Road Cess being charged at very high rates have been noted *e.g.*, Goberda and Ragnat in the [Appendix I (*b*), Nos. VIII and XXVI].

*Pulses

MIDNAPORE.

135. *Midnapore Zamindari Company (Thanas Binpur, Garbheta and Salbani)* — I instructed my Assistant to obtain past *jamabandis* from the Manager, but the latter failed to produce them In Binpur there has been, and is apparently still going on, a gradual measurement of the villeges in the Silda Pargana, but as to how rents would be increased, the Assistant Manager, I interviewed, was reticent All the information available was that rents would be increased by 2 annas in the rupee of rent, where there was reason for doing so, and fixed rates would be settled for fresh cultivation. In Kamarbandi I obtained a list of rents, Rs 7-3-10 for bighas 17-6-4 for some recent fresh cultivation, which betokens a moderate rental. But the Sonthal Mandal himself, while objecting to the increase in his own rent, makes a considerable profit on the collections of the village [*vide* Kamarbandi in Appendix I (*c*), No. 1]. In Garbheta and Salbani, generally speaking rents have been increased. This is well illustrated by the villages in the Appendix. The average rate in the broken villages of these thanas is very much higher than in the intact villages of Ramgarh (*vide* statement below)

136. *Ramgarh and Lalgarh (Thana Binpur)*.—The Rajas of Ramgarh and Lalgarh are, I am informed, addicted to measurement of increased cultivation The statement on the next page gives some idea of the change in rates and rents in Ramgarh. It does not appear from these figures (collected by Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin) that there is very much to complain of in the rates at which rents are assessed for increased cultivation Some of the villages in the Appendix however show rents that have been increased out of proportion to the increase of cultivation.

137. *Belyabera (Thana Gopiballabhpur)*.—The rents have not been increased for 12 years since 1896 97, when a measurement of the whole mahal was undertaken, and rents fixed at different rates in different villages for different classes of land. Previous rent rolls were not forthcoming. The following is a specimen of the rates in Dhanimara village:—

	Rent per bigha (*lagi* 6 ft 9 inches) Annas
Upland—	
1st class *kala*	14
2nd " "	10
3rd " " ...	8
Rice land—	
1st class *jal* ..	14
2nd " "	10
3rd " "	8
4th " " ...	6
3rd class *jal* (*rabi* lands near the river) ..	8

138 *Khelar-Nayagram (Thana Gopiballabhpur)*.—In Nayagram there was a measurement and settlement by the Court of Wards in 1886. In 1898-99 the uplands or *dahi* lands hitherto unassessed were measured and assessed to rent. The estate used to cultivate indigo under an arrangement that the raiyats were to sow half a bigha of indigo for each plough they owned, and in return they were permitted to cultivate as much *dahi* land as they pleased. In 1898 indigo was stopped owing to the falling off in price. The four indigo factories of the estate were closed, and in the following year all the uplands were measured, and an amicable settlement of the same was carried into effect

A statement is given on the next page showing the result of this settlement in a few selected villages. But though the assessment in some villages was largely increased there are now no complaints regarding the increase, in point of fact it is regarded as a blessing in exchange for the labour of cultivating indigo, which from all accounts was not very popular.

139. *Nayabasan and Rohini.*—In Nayabasan and Chiara the rents were last settled in 1886 and 1891, respectively, and since then there has been no change, so far as my information goes. There are settlements under the Bengal Tenancy Act now going on, or have just been completed in Jhargram, Rohini, Chiara and Nayabasan.

In the northern thanas of Midnapore the practice of *mahajans* letting out lands on large produce rents is much the same as in Binpur thana, but it gets less prevalent eastwards and southwards.

RAMGARH

Serial No	Name of Zamindar	Name of Village	Old area held by Sonthal Mandal	Present area held by Sonthal Mandal	Old *Jama*	Present *Jama*	REMARKS
			B C D.	B C D			
1	Raja of Ramgarh	Harulia	90 9 6 in 1291	193 9 10	9 A 5 K 2 P Rs 27 11-3½	9½ A. Rs 50-9-4½	In 1296 the *jama* was Rs 31 8 *plus* 9½ Ara paddy for Rs 142
2	Ditto	Benagaria .	76 5 10 1302 to 1308	118 9 10 1309 to 1315	16 A 4 K. Rs 19-8-6	18 A 12 K Rs 31-13 0	
3	Ditto .	Chota Brindabanpur	41 7 0 in 1305	54 10 5	1 A paddy Rs 21-5 0	1 A 14 K Rs 27-8 0	
4	Ditto	Chunpara	Mot Mauza 1876 cess return	182 0 0	Rs 12-0-0	12 A Rs. 14-0-0	
5	Ditto ..	Gayra	111 13 0 in 1293	111 13 0	22 A 7 K 6 P Rs 47-11-6	22 A 7 K 6 P Rs 47-11 6	No change
6	Ditto	Bonpokharia	219 0 0 in 1889	219 0 0	25 A Rs 42-9-0	25 A Rs 42-9-0	(It is alleged that the old village *jama* was Rs 12 and 12 Aras paddy)
7	Ditto	Bandgora	153 4 0 *patta* 1886	153 4 0	41 A 7½ P. Rs 37-15-9	41 A 7½ P Rs 37-15-9	

A=ara=16 kuris.
K=kuri=16 pais
P=pais
Rents are paid in money and in grain

Jamabandis of the Khelar-Nayagram Estate

Serial No	Name of Village	Year	SETTLEMENT OF RENT OF LANDS, EXCLUDING UPLANDS		Year	SETTLEMENT OF UPLANDS.	
			Area.	Rent		Area	Rent
			B K CH.	Rs. A. GS		B K CH	Rs A. GS
1	Basyabhol ..	1884	21 6 4	6 10 7½	1899	46 8 8	14 6 6
2	Palasiya ..	1885	205 3 5	78 11 6¼	,,	26 1 10	16 1 18½
3	Panchgachia ..	,,	130 0 14	49 14 5¼	,,	147 16 8	56 1 0½
4	Rokhnimara .	,,	111 14 0	36 11 0¼	,,	86 1 12	35 14 0
5	Mohonpura ...	1886	189 2 0	118 1 11	,,	398 10 9	109 8 3½
6	Chilimda ..	,,	31 6 4	114 0 10½	,,	20 3 0	6 5 5
7	Bara Talpada	1884	102 14 0	68 7 7	,,	206 1 12	90 12 4½
8	Rakhni ..	1885	188 4 4	93 2 10¾	,,	47 1 4	21 8 8¾
9	Astia	1884	99 8 14	37 9 6½	,,	162 2 7	73 7 15

BALASORE

140. There has been no recent increase of rent. The last measurement in the four-annas share of pargana Fatehabad was in 1305. The old *jamabandi* papers are said to be non-existent, but rents appear to be still low. In the other ten-annas share, rents have been the same for at least 20 years, since the last measurement when rents were fixed.

CHAPTER VIII.

EFFECTS OF SETTLEMENTS.

(*Terms of the Reference No. VIII.*)

BIRBHUM

141. The effects of the different settlements in Birbhum have already been observed as different questions arose It remains only to bring briefly together the leading results of these settlements. There have been three settlements.—

(1) Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement (1881—83), in which practically all the Sonthal villages in the Rampur Hat subdivision were measured, in which a compromise was arranged between the proprietor and a headman, and in which certain rates of rent given in Chapter VII were fixed. This was not a record-of-rights under any law, but a record of rents and areas.

(2) Munshi Nundji's settlement of the estate of the Mohant of Mollarpur (1891—93) under the Bengal Tenancy Act, forming a record of existing rights and conditions, in which rates of rent were fixed for the Sonthals.

(3) The Burdwan Khas Mahals settlement under the Bengal Tenancy Act finished in 1892.

142. The principal results of the first *quasi* settlement, so far as the Sonthals are concerned, are as follows —

(1) The breakage of the Mostagiri system has been delayed. In the villages settled with a Mostagir one third of the villages are now broken, whilst in the unsettled village the proportion is three quarters.

(2) By fixing a low rate of rent, a restrictive influence has been brought to bear on the increase in the rate of rent. Though rates are now being increased, and in some cases very largely, there can be no doubt that they would have been very much higher, had it not been for this settlement.

(3) The Sonthals have acquired rights as occupancy raiyats.

It has had no effect in the following particulars:—

(1) It has not prevented the proprietor from charging higher rates of rent for excess land or for fresh settlement of land, though as before there has been a restrictive influence at work.

(2) It has not prevented transfers.

(3) It has not entirely done away with illegal *abwabs* or *amlas* exactions.

(4) Though a *chittha* or detailed description of the lands in the whole village was prepared, no *khatian* was given to each raiyat. Consequent on the inevitable changes since 1881, and the amount of reclamation that has taken place, these *chitthas* are now of little use.

143. The main effects of the second settlement were in effect to settle all outstanding disputes between the landlord and tenant, to confirm the rights of the Sonthals as settled raiyats, and to fix the Sonthals' rent at rates less than those fixed for Dikkus. But it has not prevented the landlord illegally increasing the rates of rent for excess cultivation. In a few villages, *e.g.*, Rampur [Appendix I (*a*), No. XV], the record-of-rights has been absolutely ignored by the intermediate tenure-holders.

144. The effects of the third settlement on the Sonthals have been unfortunate in one respect owing to there being no law regarding headmen. In the report the following remarks occur :—

The Manjhi *jotes* prevailing here, are to all intents and purposes the same as ordinary "settled" holdings, but they partake somewhat of the nature of "tenures" properly so-called. The Manjhi or Mostagir is the Sonthal village headman, who takes a settlement

of large tracts of land and sublets it to Sonthal settlers in small patches, reserving a portion for his own use They hold generally at low rates in consideration of their usefulness to landlords in reclaiming waste-lands. As a hardy race accustomed to a rough life, they are pre-eminently fitted for all kinds of difficult cultivation, and are on this account very much in requisition among Birbhum land-owners for bringing barren high lands and forest tracts under the plough.

145. These remarks demand some criticism. In the first place, they give the impression that the Sonthal is the landlord's labourer, whose use is to reclaim land for the ultimate benefit of the landlord. This is entirely the landlord's point of view. He forgets that the Sonthal has made the land out of what was to him then an almost valueless asset. He proceeds to raise the rent, or to try and oust the Sonthal, because he is covetous of the fruits of the Sonthal's labour. It is only recently the landlord has begun to exploit the jungles, and to preserve them for their timber. But in this area he has now no opportunity of doing this, as there is practically no jungle left. It seems to be the duty of Government to combat this forgetfulness on the part of the proprietor.

In the second place, the recording of the Manjhi, as a settled raiyat, has had the unfortunate effect of causing all the other Sonthals to be recorded as under-raiyats. The result is that in neighbouring villages held by small proprietors, whenever a Sonthal village is sold up for rent, all the Sonthals are treated as under-raiyats and are dispossessed. For instance, in Dhangalpara, a *mahajan* bought the village from the Mostagir and obtained recognition by the proprietor (not the Maharaja of Burdwan). The *mahajan* deliberately defaulted in the payment of rent; he was sold up for rent, and all the Sonthals were dispossessed He is said to have been in league with the proprietor, who has now got *khas* possession over all the lands, and is going to give the *mahajan* a lease of them In Moldanga, where the Sonthals are recorded in the record-of-rights as under-raiyats of the Mostagir, some of them have sold their lands to *mahajans*, who refuse to pay rent to the Mostagir. Consequently the Mostagir cannot pay his rent, and the village will possibly be sold up for rent, with the anticipated result that one of the *mahajans* will somehow or other obtain possession of the hamlet and oust all the Sonthals from possession.

146. Mr. Skrefsrud's villages have been measured by him, and assessments made at rates similar to those fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, or in some cases at lower rates. The total rents are high, but the villages are much larger than the ordinary Sonthal villages. One thing to which definite exception must be taken is the illegal gomastha cess of one anna in the rupee. There is however not much doubt that the villages are kept in better order by the Revd. L. O Skrefsrud than other villages in Birbhum.

147 In the unsettled area in Rajnagar and Muhammad Bazar, except for the Burdwan settlement, the majority of the villages have never been settled, and the raiyats are at the mercy of the landlord, so far as the total of the rents is concerned* in intact villages, in this respect it differs from the settled villages in the Rampur Hât subdivision, where they are more at the mercy of the landlords, so far as excess cultivation is concerned. In broken villages, in the unsettled area of Rajnagar, there has been little restrictive influence, beyond the neighbourhood of the Sonthal Parganas, at work in preventing rents being raised For example [Appendix I(a , Nos. XVII and XVIII] in Madarpur the rents now average 12 annas a bigha, and in Kuralmetia Rs. 1 a bigha, which are much higher than the rates, to which the zamindars in Rampur Hât subdivision have yet been able to raise their rents.

In Bolpur the condition of the Sonthals is reported to be better, but this is doubtless due to the fact that the cultivation is more recent.

BANKURA, MIDNAPORE AND BALASORE

148. There has been no settlement in the areas in Bankura or Balasore under report. In Midnapore the settlements in Jhargram, Nayabasan, Chiara and Rohini are only just completed. or are still going on, and it is too early to ascertain their effect.

CHAPTER IX.

SUBINFEUDATION BY THE PROPRIETOR.

(*Terms of the Reference No. VI.*)

BIRBHUM.

149. In this area there is a large number of proprietors, most of them small ones, who are either *patnidars*, *darpatnidars* or *sepatnidars*. In these circumstances, it is difficult to draw the line between the actual zamindar and the tenure-holder. There are a few landlords, like P. C. Pande of Pakour, who accepted Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement in 1881 and has not even changed the rents of the village since then, although there must have been considerable reclamation. There is a big proprietor, like the Mohant of Mollarpur, who up to 1892 was always fighting with his tenants, and was then believed to have been most oppressive, and who is now settling new reclaimed land at rates much higher than those settled by legal proceedings for the Sonthals in the pargana. There are landlords, like P. C. Chaudhry, who has recently increased his rents to quadruple what the rent was in 1881, though the area under cultivation has only doubled. There are *mahajan*-proprietors, like some of the Mulhati Babus, whose aim has been to get most of the cultivation of their villages into their own hands.

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In the Sadar subdivision, there is the Maharaja of Burdwan, who is admittedly a good landlord.

150. Exactions of Re. 1 by the gomashta and Re. 1 by the peon per village are by no means uncommon. In some cases the Sonthals apparently pay something for their receipts, but it is difficult to distinguish this from gomashta-cess. The Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud charges gomashta-cess at the rate of one anna in the rupee. This is defended by him on the ground that it is the custom in the Sonthal Parganas. It finds a place in his books, audited in Calcutta.

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151. *Bethbegar*, or free labour, from the tenants at the time of ploughing and harvesting the crop, is still taken by the proprietors, either directly or indirectly by paying the tenants below the market price of their labour. Vegetables are supplied free to the proprietors' *amla* and occasionally to the proprietor. Landlords occasionally come down to the village when the crop is cut, there have it sold to the *mahajan* or *banya*, and the rent is realised on the spot At all events all the landlords arrange to have some one present when the crop is being cut. The Sonthals term it forcible realisation of rents, which it really is. I have myself seen a zamindari peon in a position which can only be described as that of a custodian of the raiyat's crop, while it was being threshed. He seemed a bit ashamed and divested himself of the large staff he was carrying.

152. But the matters mentioned in the last paragraph do not trouble the Sonthals much, except in a few cases. Their main objections are to the dispossession of land by *mahajans*, to the loss of the headman's right and to the raising of rents. Changes in ownership by sub-infeudation since 1881 are not very common, but in the Appendix will be found several instances to prove that in such cases tenure-holders are more oppressive than landlords. In Jitpur [Appendix I(*a*), No. I] the *mahajan* put in by the proprietor is assessing rents for excess cultivation at double rates. In Karangdih [Appendix I(*a*), No. III] a similar *mahajan* has dispossessed the Sonthals of most of their lands and turned them into their servants. In Debdattapur and Dharmpur [Appendix I(*a*), Nos. VIII and X] the Sonthals have become the servants of the owners. In Dharmpur one of the owners has given to his own son and others a lease of some Sonthali land in the village, which he had obtained by sale, and now the son has become a raiyat and planted Sonthal under-raiyats on the land. In Bajpara [Appendix I(*a*), No. XII] a mukhtear bought the village at an auction-sale, and proceeded to raise the rents from Rs. 18 to Rs. 93. In the Mollarpur villages, intermediate tenure-holders are absolutely ignoring the record-of-rights. For example, in Rampur they have taken away all the uplands of the Sonthals and

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increased the rents [Appendix I(*a*), No. XV]. There is not the slightest doubt that tenure-holders are more oppressive than landlords. Their aim is to make money out of the village. They have generally only that village and can therefore devote their attention to it.

BANKURA.

153. To the question what effect the practice of subinfeudation by zamindars has had on the Sonthals, the only answer can be a most adverse effect. To the other question, whether tenure-holders are more oppressive than zamindars, the answer is undoubtedly "yes," provided they are *mahajans*. Page 18 The reason is that in Bankura, subinfeudation takes the form of subinfeudation Pages 28 29. to money lenders or grain-dealers whose only object is to make money. Page 45. But in this area there is very little chance of a comparison between the methods of the zamindar and the tenure-holder, because subinfeudation is so very prevalent; the large zamindars have let their villages out on lease or distributed them amongst their adherents, in a number of cases are heavily involved and in other cases their estates have been sold up in satisfaction of their debts. The villages under the Chhatna Raj have been leased to tenure-holders, so long as the villages were under the Raj they appear to have been intact, but the tenure-holders proceeded to break down the system and raise the rents. As an example of the kind of thing a tenure holder indulges in, the oldest and largest village in Chhatna may be cited. The tenure-holders brought successively against the Sonthal headman, who was formerly a substantial *mokurridar*, a suit for compensation for having excavated a *band* and turned waste-lands into cultivation, a criminal case for having cut trees, a title suit for the uncultivated area and a rent suit on account of increased demand, but each of them was decided in favour of the headman. But the headman and his co-sharers had already executed a mortgage bond for Rs. 399 in favour of one Gayaram Kar, who is said to have paid no ready money, but promised them to look after the civil suits and supply the necessary expenses. As he failed to do so, others came in and looked after the civil suits, to whom the headman and his co-sharers had to transfer their lands on the termination of the civil suits for the expenses they had incurred, and so on, until the *mokuraridar* was ruined. In Chhatna the Tambolis (or betel-sellers) possess the worst reputation as tenure-holders. They are also cultivators and *mahajans*, and indulge in all the usual *mahajani* Page 40 practices in order to obtain possession of the Sonthals' lands. The smaller tenure-holders also indulge a little in arbitrary eviction.

154. Khatra thana used to be called Dhalbhum, and formerly belonged to a Raja of the washerman caste. It is now divided into two estates, Supur and Ambikanagar The greater portion of the Supur estate has been sold, and that of Ambikanagar has been sold to Sir Sourindra Mohan Thakur, and is in the Court of Wards. The big landowner as the immediate rent-receiver of the Sonthal does not now exist, except in the villages under Sir Sourindra Mohan Thakur, Messrs. Gisborne and Company and the Simlapal Raja, the *mahajans* have taken the place of the rent-receivers. The result is [*vide* in village Goberda in the Appendix I (*b*), No. VIII] that they immediately try and get all the land in their possession. In the same village the *mahajan* proprietor charges road cess at an illegal rate, about 2 annas in the rupee. The difference between the ways of the *mahajan* tenure-holder and the zamindar are well illustrated in the village of Hainagurni [Appedix I (*b*), No. IX] by the rents. Where the *mahajan* has bought land, he lets it out again at a high produce rental equivalent to twenty fold the original rent, but the zamindar is content to increase the rent, when land has been sold up to a little more than double the original [*vide* case of Duma Manjhi No. (7)]. The Sonthals respect the Khatra Raja, but dislike the *mahajan*-proprietor and his ways.

155. In the Raipur thana, portions of the estate of Syamsunderpur have been sold, Phulkusma has also been sold; and Raipur has been leased out to Messrs. Gisborne and Company in satisfaction of debts. Of the villages examined, except those held by Messrs. Gisborne and Company, all the villages were held by tenure-holders, mostly *mahajans*. An occasional village would be found, like Halodkanali, where the proprietor was a Bengali Brahmin, and not a *mahajan*,

who admittedly treated the Sonthals well. In Onda the tenure-holders are not reported to be oppressive; in this area the Sonthals cultivate most of the lands *bhagti*. *Bethbegar* is practically a universal institution. In some cases, as in Goberda and Harnagurni, the Sonthals have to give *bethbegar* both to the immediate rent-receiver and the Khatra Raj. They appear to give it willingly enough to the Khatra Raj, which they regard with respect and a certain amount of sympathy on account of its indebtedness. Besides *bethbegar*, vegetables have to be provided either for the tenure-holder or for the zamindar's *amla*. At festivals or funerals a subscription called *mangan* is levied. If a *mahajan*-proprietor buys a horse, the Sonthals are made to contribute towards its purchase.

MIDNAPORE

Page 11 156. The Jungle Mahals, divided as they are between large proprietors, of which the chief are the Midnapore Zamindari Company, the Nawab of Murshidabad, the Maharaja of Mourbhanj and the Raja of Jhargram, may be divided into two halves. The northern half is that in which the Mandal or Aimadar or Ijaradar corresponds to a tenure-holder, and has intervened between the proprietor and the raiyat, and the southern half is that where the mandal or Pradhan is practically only the zamindar's tahsildar or does not exist at all, and there is practically no subinfeudation As to how far this state Pages 20 23 of affairs has affected the Sonthal headman system has already been discussed in the chapter on that system

157. In the first area where the Mandal is also a *mahajan*, he is enabled by his position to carry on his *mahajani* business with greater success with his raiyats, and he is more oppressive than the proprietor. The Mandal in this area also manages to distribute the road cess he has to pay amongst his tenants; even the Sonthal Mandal does so [*vide* Kamarbandi, Appendix I (*a*), No. I] in which village the cess has been levied at one anna in the rupee of rent on each raiyat'. *Bethbegar* is sometimes taken. When the *mahajan* tenure-holder obtains land from the tenant by arent or private sale, he lets it out on a produce rack-rent This the landlordproper does not do.

158. In the second area, the *mahajan* is tabooed by the proprietor as a tenure-holder. In the first area, however, the Midnapore Zamindari Company is the principal proprietor, and as a company formed to make money out of zamindari Page 16 they may be relied upon to obtain their pound of flesh They have increased rents in the past in Garhbeta and Salbani. In Binpur they are about to do so. They seemingly are not free from trouble with the tenants. In one case the zamindari peons had been sent to obtain possession of some jungle, but the Sonthal who owned it resisted and shot one of the peons with an arrow. The Sonthal was convicted for this (he admitted to me he had shot the arrow), but he was found in possession of the jungle. The other landlords who Page 11 demand notice in this area are the Rajas of Ramgarh and Lalgarh. The first or his ancestor, as already remarked, has cut off slices of villages for his own Page 46 use when they are cleared and ready for a settlement. He also indulges in periodical measurements and revisions of rent. He charges *mangan* called *haltaki* at the rate of a rupee a plough on the occasion of a birth, death, or marriage in his family The Raja of Lalgarh charges a cess on the profits it realised by the Mandals from the raiyats over and above the rent. This is called "*perjar munafar upar dharja*." In the south, amongst the other large proprietors, little oppression now exists, except by the zamindari peons or *amla* In Nayagram, there are many complaints against the peons of the estate, who always exact something whenever they come to the village and who Pages 46 47 take hush money from the Sonthals for cutting the forbidden *sâl*. In the same estate the rents were considerably enhanced on account of the assessment of *dahi* lands (uplands) in 1898 (*vide* Chapter on rent), but the present fixity of the rent is regarded as a blessing by the Sonthals, and there was no complaint regarding this. *Mangan*, or a cess collected on the occasion of any ceremony or other special reason, *e.g*, the purchase of an elephant, is common even amongst the smaller of the large proprietors. Occasionally the Sonthal does not even know what the collection is for.

BALASORE.

Page 23 159 There are few remarks to be made on the subject of subinfeudation because the villages are all *khas* in the 10 anna share, and are

held by Sonthal Pradhans or Ijaradars in the other share. In the first area there is practically no oppression by the zamindar, but the tahsildars demand and receive *bethbegars* for the cultivation of their own lands and are supplied with fuel at certain festivals.

160. In the second area where the *amla* have a great deal of power in the estate *bethbegari* is said to be regularly demanded by the *amla*. The *amla* in this estate, as already noted, have taken advantage of their position to get lands into their own hands by *mahajani*. and a few instances of arbitrary eviction by them have also come to light. Page 41

GENERAL

161 The real proprietors of the soil the Sonthals respect, however much they grumble at their exactions. There are good and bad proprietors, but the tenure-holder is as a rule more oppressive than the landlord, far more if he is a *mahajan*, which he is to a large extent in Bankura and north Midnapore and to some extent in Birbhum. Such a tenure-holder receives no respect from the Sonthals The effect of sub-infeudation on the village headman system has been sufficiently indicated in the Chapter on that system It is difficult to say of proprietors and tenure-holders which are more keen to break an intact village. On the whole, it is probably the latter.

CHAPTER X.

MISCELLANEOUS.

(*Terms of the Reference No. X.*)

The matters treated in this Chapter have only been the incidental subject of inquiry]

EDUCATION

BIRBHUM

162 The following note by the Deputy Inspector of Schools in Birbhum illustrates the state of education amongst the Sonthals in that district —

From a reference to my office records, I find that the history of Sonthal education in this district dates from the year 1881, when five schools were opened as an experimental measure especially for the education of Sonthal children, Since then such schools have been maintained with varying success, but the education in them has all along been mainly confined to the 3 Rs, taught through the medium of Bengali, the vernacular of the district The Middle school returns sometimes show Sonthal pupils in stages higher than the Primary. but such cases are very rare, and the exact number cannot be given, as figures are not available, During the current year, as far as I remember, I noticed two or three Sonthal pupils receiving education beyond the primary stage in Middle schools A statement showing the progress of Sonthal education in this district during the quinquennium ending in March 1909 is annexed It shows that the progress, though not very encouraging during the first three years of the quinquennium has, during last two years, been satisfactory as far as schools and pupils are concerned. But the progress of education is not judged only by the number of schools and pupils, the principal factor determining it being the efficiency of the teachers and the taught What we have done now is the collection of materials only, and it will take years to complete the work of construction and consolidation, which, having regard to the conservation of the Sonthals, cannot but be slow * * * * * * In 1907-08 the Director of Public Instruction (on the report of the District Magistrate) was pleased to sanction Rs 4,600 for Sonthal education in this district, the full amount for which we have applied. In the latter part of 1906-07, the Sub-Inspectors of Schools were requested to open new Sonthal schools in their respective areas, with the result that so many as 61 schools were returned in 1907-08 Most of the existing schools are still in their infancy, and it would be premature now to say anything about their success * * * * The working of those schools is watched with keen interest, not only by the Educational officers, but also by the District Magistrate himself, and it is hoped that the result achieved will, if not fully commensurate to the cost incurred, be not quite disappointing The Sonthal pupils are exempted from payment of school fees, and a special Lower Primary Scholarship has been reserved for them It will not be out of place to mention here that the age limit, which is 13 years in the case of aboriginal pupils competing for Lower Primary Scholarships, stands not infrequently in

the way of their getting such scholarships; and I am of opinion that it may be raised to 16 years, at least, in the case of scholarships reserved for them, if not for general competition. A Sonthali-knowing Assistant Sub-Inspector of Schools has of late been appointed to supervise the progress of the Sonthal education in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore, and his efforts to popularise education among the Sonthals will, I believe, not prove altogether fruitless

Statement shewing the progress of Sonthal Education in the District of Birbhum during the quinquennium ending in March 1909.

Year.	Number of Sonthal schools	Total number of schools, excluding those in column 2	Percentage of figures in column 2 on those in column 3	Number of Sonthal pupils in Sonthal schools.	Total pupils at schools, excluding those in column 5	Percentage of figures in column 5 on those in column 6	Expenditure from public funds: Provincial Revenues	Expenditure from public funds: District Funds	Expenditure from public funds: Total.	Number of Sonthal teachers employed on these schools, and their qualifications	Number passed the Lower Primary Examination from Sonthal schools.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1901-05 ...	18	1,034	1 7	486	27,607	1 7	840	117	957	1 Upper Primary passed	4	All Lower Primary schools.
1905-06 ...	20	1,035	1 9	518	28,449	1 8	825	113	938	Ditto	2	
1906-07 ...	29	1,030	2 8	648	27,722	2 3	790	155	945	1 Upper Primary and 1 Lower Primary passed	3	
1907-08 .	61	1 098	5 5	1,219	29,757	4 0	4,600	...	4,600	3 Upper Primary and 2 Lower Primary passed	3	1 Upper Primary and 60 Lower Primary schools
1908 09 ...	61	Figures not available now		1,181	Figures not available now		4,600		4,600	3 Upper Primary and 1 Lower Primary passed	4	

163. There certainly has been an advance made in education, as compared with the condition of Bankura and Midnapore.* In the village of Gopalpur there were as many as 20 Sonthals on the register, and only 15 Muhammadans When a school has been established in any village, the Sonthals of that village and a few from the villages very near attend it But, if the school is at a little distance, very few of the children do. In villages where there has been much dispossession, the people are rather apathetic about educating their children, as they say they have to work now as labourers, and will always have to work as such. For example, in Kalyanpur, the villagers go off to work in the quarries of Pakaur, and take their children along with them. Page 1 There are a few, but very few, well-educated Sonthals. An example is Durga Manjhi, the Perganait in Rampur Hât, who has stirred the Sonthals up to a sense of their wrongs and grievances. To this I must add that Mr Skrefsrud, a matter which is well known to Government, has done a great deal towards educating the Sonthals. His Mission can be relied upon to furnish Sonthal school masters in the Birbhum schools.

* District.		Sonthal population	Number of Sonthal pupils
Birbhum	...	47,221	1,184
Bankura		1,05,682	1,328
Midnapur	...	1,48,251	1,481

BANKURA.

164. "No one in the village can read or write. We do not send our children to school. There is a school a mile off. It has a Dikku master. We do not send our children to it. It is too far. We cannot pay the fees. Our boys are frightened of the Dikku boys. They also are required as labourers. Yes, we recognise that education will help us against the *mahajan*. If there is a school close at hand, a Sonthal school master and no fees, we would send our children to school." That is the usual kind of reply received. Some of them, however, are very much alive to the necessity of education as a weapon against the *mahajan*, and would welcome education. There are, of course, educated men here and there, and possibly in every other village or so a man can be found who can read and write, and in a few villages even three or four men. But in the north, in Chhatna, it is reported that educated persons can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand, a collecting member of a panchayat, two daffadars, one village school-master and few others.

165. Two villages were found in which Sonthal schools existed some ten or twenty years ago, but they were subsequently discontinued In one fees had to be paid, which was a deterrent. In another village the children used to go to school, but a Dikku school-master, who punished them, was appointed instead of a Sonthal, and they ceased going to school. Where villages have just started with a Sonthal school-master, I have noticed an increase in attendance

166 Such an outlook is not very encouraging, but, as a matter of fact, in recent years some progress has been made in education, as the following figures show —

Class of School.		1908-1909		1902-1903	
		Total number of pupils	Sonthal pupils	Total number of pupils	Sonthal pupils
High English	...	2,164	...	2,116	...
Middle ,,	...	1,928		1,867	2
,, Vernacular	.	1,140	1	1,138	.
Upper Primary	...	8,748	102	8,031	94
Lower ,,	...	28,854	924	24,851	395
Other Schools	...	557	1	315	6
Private Institutions	...	455	..	477	...
Total	...	43,846	1,328	38,795	497

It will appear that the number of Sonthal pupils has risen from 497 in 1902-03 to 1,328, or by 831. The children generally end their education in Primary schools

167. It is reported that as a rule the boys pay practically little or no fees. The increase in numbers is reported to be due to the introduction of capitation allowances paid from the departmental primary grant to the *gurus* for teaching aboriginal pupils in addition to the ordinary District Board grant—a method calculated to increase paper numbers.

168. The percentage of Sonthal pupils to the whole number of pupils is 3 02,, but as the percentage of the Sonthal population to the whole population is 9 5, the number of Sonthals attending school is considerably in defect of the population. Under the 15 per cent. rule, 15,852 Sonthals are of a school-going age, whereas only 1,328 actually attend school, that is 8·3 per cent. of the whole number of a school-going age.

At present there are 13 Sonthal teachers in the district against 9 and 11 in the last two preceding years respectively.

169. The following table shows the number of scholarships awarded to Sonthal pupils for the past four years.—.

Year.	Number of Sonthal Pupils obtaining Scholarships			
	Junior Scholarship.	Middle Scholarship	Upper Primary Scholarship	Lower Primary Scholarship.
1908	..	...	1	2
1907	...	...		2
1906		1	..	6*
1905	...	1	.	4

* Including one girl

170. The Sarenga Mission has also done a good deal towards the education of the Sonthals, as the following account kindly given by the Revd. G. E. Woodford will show:—

"Our educational work amongst the Sonthals began at Bishnupur about 30 years ago, when a boarding school for Sonthal-boys was established, which has continued up to the present time. It was removed to Bankura soon after its inception, and there it developed into the "Sonthal Training School." Then about nine years ago, when we took up the Sonthal work in earnest, and established ourselves at Sarenga, the school was transferred to that place. The school is a Middle Vernacular school and has a good record. For a number of years in succession our boys won scholarships, and quite a number of teachers have been turned out by it. We have some dozen village schools in connection with the Mission, the average about 20 pupils each, but are not purely Sonthal, the teachers of all of which we have trained ourselves. An even greater number of our old Sonthal boys are running, with more or less success, independent schools in the district. Three or four of our best boys have been sent to Bankura to read English, and one of them takes his intermediate this year

About six years ago we established a Sonthal girls' boarding school, which teaches up to the Upper Primary standard only Our pupils in this school are all Christians. Besides the ordinary subjects, we teach the girls sewing and drawn thread work We try not to lift them out of their station. Our aim is to create a community of intelligent, thrifty, sober, clean Sonthal cultivators, in this area. There are from 40 to 50 boarders in each of these schools. As a rule, the pupils in the village schools do not get very far They are taken away to help their parents whenever they are busy, and, being discouraged, they soon give up reading under such unfavourable circumstances altogether. In the boarding school, on the other hand, it is the rule for the boys to read steadily, as long as we see that there is any hope of their being able to profit by it

The American Baptists of Midnapore once had a lot of village schools in this neighbourhood, and I am constantly coming across Sonthals who have learned to read and write under them. I understand that Government used to give them generous help for developing education amongst the Sonthals. With help from Government, we could do much to develop the village school system in this area

Probably a dozen men, who have read up to the Middle Vernacular standard, are available as teachers, if Government require them.

If Government is in earnest about extending education amongst the people, I consider that a special man should be appointed to work it up in each area. He might work under the existing Educational authorities in each district, but I should prefer that he did not. The essentials for success in village schools are perhaps:—

(1) Holidays during the very busy times of cultivation.
(2) Absence of fees.
(3) Employment of Sonthal teachers.
(4) Absence of Hindu scholars, at least, in any number.

Another thing that I think the Sonthals feel is that there is no prospect for them when they have learned, say up to the Middle Vernacular standard. All they can look forward to now is the becoming a teacher of an independent Primary school, where they may or may not earn enough to keep body and soul together. The District Board may possibly give a small grant, but that is uncertain, and depends on influence to a large extent.

It usually means great sacrifice for Sonthals to educate their boys up to the Middle Vernacular standard, and some of them, I fear, are coming to the conclusion that the result is not worth it."

MIDNAPORE.

171. My information on the subject of the education of Sonthals in Midnapore is rather meagre. The are 45 Primary schools under the control of the Missionary bodies, where Sonthals and other aboriginal bodies receive instruction, each having on an average 20 boy pupils. Altogether there are 900 boys and 190 girls under training. All these schools are taught by Sonthals. The number of Sonthal pupils in ordinary Primary schools taught by non-aboriginal teachers for the last two years is as follows :—

1908-09	391
1907-08	387

The Midnapore District Board has reserved two Lower Primary scholarships for aboriginal pupils. In Jhargram; though many of the schools are connected with, or contiguous to, Sonthal bodies, they rarely attend them. But the state of affairs is very similar to that in Bankura, and south of the Subarnarekha is ever worse. Binpur, Garhbeta, Jhargram and Salbani are well within the influence of the different Missionaries, and efforts are being made to educate the Sonthals, but even in Midni, a large village of 60 houses, where there is a school, only two persons know how to read and write, and four know a little. How liable to failure these efforts are, is obvious from the fact that in two or three places like Kristonagar there were once schools, which have now been given up. There was another school at Chamarband (Gopiballabhpur) under the Bhimpur Mission, with a school-master who was paid Rs. 5 by the Sonthals ; but they ceased to pay, and the school ceased to exist.

172. The Sonthals in this district are more or less apathetic on the subject of education, but occasionally an enthusiastic Sonthal will be found who wants his children educated. One brought three of his children to me for examination. He used to send them to school in another village, but had taken them away because they only pretended to go. In Rohini also there are comparatively a large number of Christian Sonthals, who are educated. In the same mahal there is a *pathsala* with a Sonthal *guru* who gets about Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 a month from about 25 pupils paying fees varying from 2 to 4 annas a month. These remarks do not apply to the Bhumijes in Rohini, who are still more backward. South of the Subarnarekha the almost universal state of affairs is that no one can read or write, and no one goes to school; indeed, in some places, they do not know Bengali well enough to go and normal to labour amongst the Dikkus. Yet at Ambi there is a *pathsala* whose master is a Bhumij; he has 30 pupils, of whom 10 are Bhumij and 20 are Sonthals, and he receives about Rs. 2-8, or Rs. 3 a month. The school had not been inspected by the rural Sub-Inspector for three years. The percentage of Christian Sonthals south of the Subarnarekha is very small.

BALASORE.

173. There are 37 schools in the area inhabited by the Sonthals in the permanently-settled part of the district, north of the Subarnarekha, of which ten are classed as 'Lower Primary Sonthal Mission Schools, and are managed by the Baptist Mission. There are besides this six other Mission schools of different kinds—kindergarten, girls,' zenana and mistresses'.

174. The Mission are thus doing all they can to educate the aborigine. Nevertheless, touring through the district and taking up haphazard villages, the usual reply I received was that no one could read or write, and that no

one went to school. Sonthal school-masters are employed in the schools; and from the accounts and papers of one Sonthal school-master, it would appear that no fees are charged. His remuneration was Rs. 4 a month; the total number of pupils on his register 21, and the average attendance 76 per cent.

GENERAL

Page 92 (Recommendation No. 8)

175. I entirely agree that the essentials mentioned by the Revd. G. E Woodford are essential for success; of these, the most important are a Sonthal school-master, and the absence of fees; the holidays in cultivation time should be given as a matter-of-course, and the schools should be for aborigines only. I would suggest that Sonthal education be developed on these lines. Missions might be asked to supply school-masters, and in return some subsidy might be given. The Sonthals of different villages would probably agree to build a house for the school-master. A clean house, such as the Sonthals build for themselves, would be quite sufficient. I would certainly not attempt to raise subscriptions for expensive schools built on any standard plan. The first effort should be made in the Perganait's village through the Perganait, and his influence brought to bear on the Sonthal headmen in all the other villages.

STATE OF LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

BIRBHUM.

176. The Sonthal is proverbial for his taste for drink, but he prefers to manufacture his own liquor called *hanri* or rice-beer. This also he uses for religious purposes, when it is made by the women in a ceremonial manners In this district at the *Barna* and *Saharul* festivals, its manufacture is allowed on payment of a small fee. But there is no doubt that illicit manufacture goes on at other times, although the Sonthal area is covered with *pachwai* shops held by *Sunris* as vendors. This *pachwai* (Dikku rice-beer) is the favourite drink of the Sonthal. Country-spirit is too expensive for them. Some say they do not care for it; others that they really prefer it; but. in any case, its price is beyond the Sonthal, and he does not drink it. Women drink rice-beer, but not *pachwai*, because they are more particular in ceremonial matters than men and will not touch what a Dikku has prepared. The old men are the worst drinkers, and the money that the labourers make is mostly spent in the *pachwai* shops. But money is not a necessity, as grain is accepted in lieu of cash. The Excise Deputy Collector reports that for a seer of paddy by volume, a seer of diluted *pachwai* by volume is generally supplied. The price of a seer of paddy is about three pice, and that of a seer of *pachwai* one-and-a-half pice. This agrees with my enquiries, which showed that the Sonthal in giving grain had to pay about twice as much as he would if he paid in money. This barter should be stopped. The Sonthal in this area wants to be allowed to brew his own rice-beer: firstly, because he uses it at all religious ceremonies; secondly, because the women can drink it; and, thirdly, because he wants to drink without let or hindrance.

Page 92. (Recommendation No 13)

BANKURA.

177. As in Birbhum, the Sonthals in this district are addicted to liquor. They prefer, however, the liquor made from *mahua*, molasses, etc., but where its price is too high, they drink *pachwai* or rice-beer which they regard as both food and drink. *Pachwai* from the shop is practically unknown in Raipur. They are allowed to manufacture rice-beer at home during the *Barna* festival, but they want it for other festivals. For these ceremonies, and for the use of the women, they indulge in illicit manufacture. A good *mahua* crop is also said to lead to illicit distillation.

Grain is not accepted instead of money. Sonthal vendors are not employed. Sonthals are no more habitual in their attendance at liquor shops than Bauris or other castes.

MIDNAPORE.

178. In Midnapore there is one striking feature in the state of the liquor traffic which differentiates it from Bankura and Birbhum, and that is according to the Excise Deputy Collector's report, that Sonthal and Bhumij sellers hold *pachwai* shops. Sonthal and Bhumij sellers are found in almost all shops. A Sonthal woman will drink the rice-beer prepared by a Sonthal in such a shop. But no Sonthal will use it for his ceremonies, because it is not properly prepared in a clean and ceremonial manner in new vessels. He freely admits that for these purposes he manufactures rice-beer of his own, and Mr. J. B. Wood reports that the Excise peons make hush-money out of this illicit manufacture. It is supposed that educated persons drink less than the ordinary Sonthal. I should not like to state this as a positive fact. Doubtless under the immediate notice of the Missionaries they are temperate, but I have seen cases, *e.g.*, a school-master intoxicated at 9 A.M., which lead me to accept such an opinion with a considerable amount of reserve. It is their natural fault, and very difficult to eradicate.

Grain is not received instead of money in the shops.

179. Distilled liquor is regarded as a luxury, as compared with rice-beer, which is looked upon as a necessity and as both food and drink. It is only when the Sonthal comes back from the low-lands with a little money in his pocket that he drinks country-spirit, or when there is such a liquor shop in his immediate neighbourhood. I am informed that he prefers the spirituous liquor in the cold weather.

BALASORE

180. The main difference between the state of the liquor traffic in this area and elsewhere is that houses are given licenses at 4 annas each for the home-brew of rice-beer, and the Sonthals only obtain liquor from shops on market days. The women prepare the rice-beer.

GENERAL.

181. In an early chapter it has been already premised that drink is one of the reasons for the impoverishment of the Sonthal, by which I mean drink obtained from the shop or outstill, where they spend the grain that the *mahajan* has left them out of their harvest. The only way of stopping this is to close liquor shops and outstills.

182. Country-spirit they can do very well without, but they cannot do without rice-beer. The latter is both food and drink to them, is healthy, and is used by them at their ceremonial and religious festivals But it can only be used then, when it is made by themselves in a special ceremonial manner. Rice-beer made by a Sonthal at a liquor-shop cannot be used for these purposes. And, as a matter of fact, as we have seen, they manufacture it illicitly, and the gains go, not into the hands of Government as license fees, but into the hands of the smaller Excise officials as hush-money. There is therefore ground for conceding that the Sonthal should have reasonable opportunities of manufacturing this rice-beer. The two festivals at which he is allowed to manufacture rice-beer in Birbhum are not sufficient. The provision for house-tickets and for aboriginal village headman's *pachwai* home-brewing licenses under rule 13, section XI, page 131 of the Excise Manual, is all that is required. In Balasore they have these house-tickets, and the Sonthals can only go to a liquor shop on market days once a week.

In the Sonthal Parganas, Chota Nagpur and the subdivision of Banka, in Bhagalpur, free home-brewing is allowed.

183. The question now arises whether these house-tickets, and the abolition of the liquor shop, would mend matters. I have it on the authority of Mr. Bompas and Mr. Gregson, an official and a non-official whose acquaintance with the Sonthal is of long-standing, that home-brewing would mean less drunkenness and less poverty. It is a rather difficult question to answer when put to the test of Balasore where it exists, for there the land is so poor that in any case the Sonthal does not appear very prosperous, and he also has his weekly market liquor-shop at which he can spend his money. There is, however, I think, considerable force in the argument that, if home-brewing is allowed,

then only a moderate amount of rice-beer will be drunk, because the women will only prepare sufficient for their needs according to their means. In fact, in Balasore, the men admitted that the women did not prepare enough for them. As to drunkenness and poverty, therefore, there is some reason to believe that home-brewing will lead to less, provided the liquor shop is removed.

The above is the case for the extension of the special provisions of the Excise Manual to the districts under enquiry. I have however no recommendation to make as I understand the matter has been disposed of.

THE POSSIBILITY OF AGRICULTURAL BANKS OR GRAIN GOLAS.

BIRBHUM.

184. It has already been observed that the majority of the Sonthal's transactions are in grain. In this district he sells his grain to pay his rent. In December the price of paddy was 23 seers to the rupee, and the Sonthal sold it at 22 seers, leaving the *banya* with a profit of one seer in the rupee. He buys his liquor with his grain. It is only in incidental cases, *e.g.*, for marriages, cattle, etc., that he wants money. What he wants is grain from the time his supply of the last year has run out till the next rice harvest. When a debt is turned into money, the debt stands very little chance of repayment. He has no idea of the value of money. For these reasons a money agricultural bank would be practically useless, and the development of grain agricultural banks, or as they are called grain *golas*, should, if successful, go a long way towards the improvement of the condition of the Sonthals. Two essentials are necessary for the conduct of a grain *gola*—the first is a sufficient number of educated men in the village, and the second the ability to conduct the bank in a business-like manner. As ignorance and thriftlessness, the negation of these two essentials, are two of the faults of the Sonthal, it stands to reason that the extension of the system, except under the direct guidance of some competent person, is remote. In some villages a sufficient number of educated persons can be found, but the ability to conduct a grain *gola* in a business-like manner would be almost sure to be wanting. Such villages are to be found near Mr. Skrefsrud's Mission. He has suggested the formation of a grain *gola* at Salbudra. I would suggest that one might be introduced there, provided that the Benagoria Mission will undertake to supervise it and, of course, provided the Sonthals will accept this supervision. That they will do so is not very certain. Mr. Skrefsrud is not popular with them at present. This supervision to my mind is, however, a necessity. In this district, I understand, the Sonthal pays up agricultural loans due to Government with great promptitude, although he has to borrow from the *mahajan* at 25 per cent. to do it. Mr. Skrefsrud complains however that he has difficulty in realising the money loans he makes. One reason for this is that it is a money loan; another that Mr. Skrefsrud is not Government. If the Sonthals are led to believe that a *gola* is not an institution under the control of Government, but a form of self-help, there will be a risk of failure. The Sonthals appear to understand the principles of co-operation involved thoroughly, and have expressed the most lively desire to have the *golas*; their ardour was, however, damped by the knowledge of their lack of educated men who could run them.

BANKURA

185. There are no banks in this district under the control of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. For the reasons already given under Birbhum, money banks would be impracticable. The Revd. G. E. Woodford started a bank amongst the Sonthals with a money branch. He found that the realisation of money was a difficult task, and the bank has now become a grain *gola*, pure and simple, which works without the slightest hitch. The rate of interest is one *kuri* in the ara or $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The Revd. G. E. Woodford is of opinion that grain *golas* can be easily extended amongst the Sonthals.

MIDNAPORE.

186. There are at present nine Sonthal agricultural banks in this district. As to their working I have no knowledge. If they are money banks, I recommend their conversion into grain *golas*, when the *mahajans* have been

paid off. That supervision which is so very necessary exists in this district to some degree. There are the Missionaries, and there is the Midnapore Zamindari Company. Mr. Gregson of the latter company also is of opinion that agricultural banks would be of little use, but that grain *golas* might be, and he would be willing to co-operate. Mr. Wood, the Nawab's Manager, is about to introduce agricultural banks in the estate of Khelar-Nayagram. Jhargram, being under the Court of Wards, affords Government with an opportunity of starting them in that area. The Manager of the Mourbhanj Estate of Nayabasan and Rohini could also be recommended to introduce them in these estates.

BALASORE

187. There are reported to be no agricultural banks under the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Balasore, but there are Missions here who could work them.

GENERAL

188. The first thing to be done appears to be for the Registrar of Co-operative Societies to obtain the co-operation of the different Missionaries in the different districts, and the other persons and bodies I have already mentioned, in organising and supervising agricultural *golas*. They will be able to select suitable villages where there are educated men to run them. Without personal supervision, there is little chance of the *golas* being a success at present. As already stated, money banks are not likely to be a success. The necessity for them is less, and a Sonthal will pay back a loan of grain, but rarely a money loan It is understood that one of the objects of money banks is the paying off of *mahajans*, but I think that the realization of the money lent would be found to be difficult, without forcing the Sonthal to go to another *mahajan* to raise it. This is what happens with the agricultural loans issued by Government. Two *kists* are fixed as a rule. One is fixed in the summer, when no Sonthal has any money. As a result he has to borrow from the *mahajan* at 25 per cent. to pay back a loan which he got from Government at $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. Incidentally I may recommend that the *kists* may be fixed by the Collector in such cases with reference to the time of harvest of the Sonthal's crops.

Page 92. (Recommendation No 9)

Page 92 (Recommendation No 10)

189. It would be futile to recommend Government to start a huge grain and money-lending business with the Sonthals, but it is the only practicable method of solving the problem of their indebtedness. It might, however, be tried in Government estates The loans would have to be in grain principally, and given piecemeal.

CHAPTER XI.

Migration and demand for Labour.

(Terms of the Reference No. XV.)

BIRBHUM

190. Rangamati [*vide* Appendix I(*a*), No. IV] affords a good example of the migratory customs of the Sonthal. The cultivation of the Sonthal in this area is on the edge of the laterite soil that he loves, so that, when the pressure of the population or the loss of his land drives him from his village, he is compelled to seek new land far away, if he does not remain to work as a labourer. This he has found in the Barind, already referred to, and in Murshidabad. In the more northern thanas, a good number have emigrated to those places. A few have gone to Assam to tea gardens. Then there is a large amount of inter-village migration in the neighbourhood. One man marries the daughter of another who has no son. He then goes and takes up his residence in the latter's village. The family of one of the original clearers of the village is left without a support; the children occasionally go back to the original village from which their father came, or else follow their mother to her village, and so on.

191. As the area is on the borders of the plain proper, there is no great amount of emigration for labour. This the Sonthal finds at his doors. In the northern thanas, he finds employment at the Pakaur quarries, where they get

five annas a box of stone. The whole family work—men, women and children. In other places, they labour for the Dikkus in the neighbouring villages. Near Rampur Hât, they also labour in that town. Others go and work in Bolpur thana, and settle in the southern thanas as labourers. A fair proportion of the Sonthals are now only labourers. As daily labourers, they earn about 4 or 5 annas a day. As agricultural labourers, they work as *krishans*, *e g.*, in some cases it is said that the land-holder gives them 6 *bis* of grain at 50 per cent. interest; for this they have to cultivate 12 bighas of land. They are allowed one-third of the crop, from which they have to pay back 9 *bis* of grain. Assuming that they get about 30 *bis* of grain from 12 bighas of land, they have very little left. All this contact with Dikkus has had a demoralising effect on the Sonthal. The demand for labour has given him a means of getting ready cash for his liquor Its presence at his door seems to be warping his energies for seeking fresh jungles to clear, and he is settling down as a labourer. Hitherto he has had the reputation of being truthful. Here he has lost this to a certain extent, but he has not arrived at the stage of telling an untruth without being almost at once detected.

BANKURA.

192. In Chhatna, near the coal-field, Sonthals, who have no lands, go and work in the coal mines in the months of *Chait*, *Bysak*, *Jeyt*, and also in *Bhado*, *Asin* and *Kartik*, when there is no demand for agricultural labour at home. They work for a fortnight or so and then return home, going again after a few days. They earn about 4 annas a day. A few families who have lost all the lands, have emigrated to the coal mines permanently. From the south-western portion of the district emigration to the coal mines is by no means prevalent, but from here they regularly go in large numbers to *Narmal*, that is to Burdwan and the plains of Bengal for labour during the transplanting and harvesting seasons, where they get as much as 5 or 6 annas a day They bring back a small amount of money, Rs. 2 or Rs. 5, and occasionally larger sums, with which they pay off the debts incurred by their families in their absence. The rest goes in drink. The class that labours is drawn from those who have got no lands; but two or three individuals from large families. who have not sufficient cultivation, also go off and labour. The labourer who goes *narmal* is a less attractive personage than the Sonthal who remains in the jungle.

193. The Sonthals appear to have given up going to Cachar and Assam, though they used to emigrate there. In Basdebpur one Sonthal actually brought back Rs. 100 from Assam.

MIDNAPORE

194. As in Bankura, there is a very large amount of biennial emigration towards *Narmal* in the districts of Hooghly, Burdwan and 24-Parganas for labour at the time of the sowing and cutting of the crops. In the extreme south, in some of the jungly villages on the Mourbhanj border, there is less of this emigration, but it has been given a fillip by the recent scarcity, and they now go regularly. They come back with Rs. 2 or Rs. 10 with them, with which they wipe off small debts incurred at home. They also labour in the eastern thanas. Some of those in the south go to labour in the large railway works at Kharagpur. The Sonthals do not emigrate for work to the mines, and only a few have gone to Assam.

195. The effect of this supply of labour is summed up as follows by the Revd. A. L. Kennan*.—

Thousands of them, having become landless, wander the country seeking coolie work. The mingling of the sexes on the road, the miserable provision for their sleeping where they chance to labour, being herded together here and there amongst constantly changing companions without any of the restraint of the village organisation to which they have been accustomed, is rapidly lowering the morals of the community Moreover this wandering life rapidly destroys any inclination they have towards patient industry. It is a feast or a famine. It lessens their love for home. It tends to increase petty wayside thefts and crimes. The mortality amongst these wanderers is very great, and greater amongst infants and children

* From a letter dated 31st July 1906 with which the petition of the Sonthals of Midnapore was submitted to Government.

who perish from diseases due to exposure. Those who retain their lands are still under a cloud. No one knows how soon he may be dispossessed. The encouragement to improve is absent. The better a man's lands is, the sooner some Bengali will covet it, and oust him from it

196. South of the Subarnarekha there is transmigration over the Mourbhanj border; and persons who have lost their lands, or have been pressed out by the increase of population, have crossed the border to seek fresh lands to cultivate. But the fact that a large labouring population still exists there and that labour is obtainable, leading to the condition of affairs stated by Mr. Kennan, seems to have in a measure demoralized their energies, and to have made them less eager to seek out new jungles to reclaim. Mr. Gregson is of opinion that 95 per cent. of the Sonthals in Midnapore are now labourers, or belonging to the labouring classes, with only a few bighas barely sufficient for their necessities. This is possibly the case in Garhbeta, Salbani, and the other areas like Keshpur and Chandrakona in the plains proper. But I am of opinion that it is an exaggeration towards the west and south. Though, no doubt, the proportion of labourers there is also large, many of them have lands which are still worth saving. Page

BALASORE

197. The Sonthals of this district, though in each village there is a fairly large labouring population, do not, as a rule, go to *Narmal* for work, but go over to Danton in Midnapore, or labour for the Dikkus in the neighbouring villages. For working in the neighbourhood they get 4 seers a day, and 2 seers of fried rice. The demand for labour in the Bengal districts of Hooghly, Burdwan, etc., does not appear to have penetrated amongst the Sonthals here as yet.

GENERAL.

198. The demand for labour has had the following effect: It has had the effect of diminishing the intensity of any prevalent scarcity, of providing labour for the landless labourer, and of helping the change of the population gradually from a cultivating to a labouring population. So far as making the Sonthal better off, it has had no effect at all, because the Sonthal spends all the little that he earns. Socially it has had a debasing effect, because in his search for labour he is freed from the influence of the village community, and is thrown into contact with all sorts and conditions of persons, many of these of a criminal type, from whom he derives looser ideas of truth, morality and caste These evil social effects are in their turn weaning the Sonthal from his hereditary occupation of clearing the jungle.

CHAPTER XII.

OTHER ABORIGINAL AND SEMI-ABORIGINAL TRIBES.

(*Terms of the Reference No. XIII.*)

BIRBHUM.

	Population		
	Kodas.	Bhuiyas.	Bauris
Murari	727	41	97
Nalhati	723	43	714
Rampur Hat	448	199	1,987
Maureswar	2,841	184	1,516
Suri	2,827	829	9,553
Bolpur	625	34	2,899
Dubrajpur	1,257	83	16,967

199. *Aborigines, Kodas.*—The Kodas are an aboriginal tribe (Dravidian), who, in some villages in Birbhum, have cleared jungles in the same way as the Sonthals. According to the "Tribes and Castes of Bengal" they are allied to the Mundas, which places them at once in the same category as that of the Sonthals. One of the *tolas* in Rangamati [Appendix I(*a*), No. IV] was made by a Koda. The Mostagiri right of that village was held and lost by

a Koda. No detailed enquiry has been made into the condition of the Kodas but there is no reason why any distinction should be made between, them and the Sonthals if any legislation is undertaken.

200. *Semi-aborigines, Bhuiyas* —They call themselves Ghatwals in Birbhum. Their numbers are very small, but a few have been found who have cleared the jungle and made the cultivation of the village. They display a tendency to adopt Bengali customs, and are generally classed as low-class Hindus, but are really an aboriginal tribe who come from the Tributary States of Chota Nagpur. Cases have been found in which they used to pay through a headman.

201. *Bauris.* —There are also a number of Bauris. Some of them are bearers pure and simple, but others are responsible for having cleared the lands of their villages. According to the "Tribes and Castes of Bengal" they are classed as semi-aboriginals, because their habitation is principally Western Bengal, and because their appearance shows they are non-Aryan, but they are not allied to any of the semi-aboriginal tribes, and they themselves profess to be Hindus.

202. *Dhangars.*—I have been unable to find out under what heading Dhangars have been entered in the Census Return. Two villages were found in which the Dhangars pay the rent through a Dhangar Mostagir, and another [*vide* Debdattapur, Appendix I (a), No VIII] in which they used to do so. This group is, from its absence from the Census Report, not a tribe. but a synonym for an agricultural labourer In this area they appear to be Uraons, and are accordingly an aboriginal tribe.

BANKURA.

Thana	Population.				
	Bhumij.	Bauri	Bhuiya.	Koda.	mi.
Bankura	1,704	24,606	513	539	945
Gangajalghati	...	25,9 1	...	1,066	868
Onda ..	147	9,580	11	18	163
Raipur ...	5,480	6,172	1,072	772	8,619
Simlapal Independent outpost	550	3,078	114	...	1,623
Khatra	11,440	20,147	1,884	1,451	5,290

203 To investigate the conditions of all the other aboriginal and semi-aboriginal tribes in Bankura and Midnapore would have given work for a separate inquiry of itself. We could only touch the fringe of the inquiry.

204. *Aborigines, Bhumijes.*—Bhumijes are an original tribe, principally inhabitants of thanas Raipur and Khatra. They are generally regarded as Hinduised Mundas, and are called Mundas by the Sonthals A Munda will marry his daughter to a Bhumij, but will not take her back any more into his house. In Bankura, where they have lost their original language and speak Bengali, they hail from Barabhum. They clear the jungles for cultivation just as the Sonthals do. Because they hold the majority of the *ghats* in Khatra, it is believed that they are the original inhabitants of the country.

The following office-bearers, I am informed, used to exist :—

(1) Mandal or headman,
(2) Laiya, the priest,
(3) Kudam-Laiya, the Laiya's assistant,
(4) Kotal, the messenger
(5) Paramanick, the menial who collects materials for the priest's devotions

The Mandal and Laiya are reported to be invariably the same in an intact Mandali village, in a broken village the Laiya is the descendent of the old Mandali No office bearers were found amongst the Bankura Bhumijes, except the priest, and in north Midnapore the offices of Mandal and Kotal are extinct. It is a natural corollary from the assumption that the Bhumijes are Mundas, that they should be in the same state as regards dispossession of lands etc, as the Sonthals are. This is the case, *e.g.*, village Ranibandh

[Appendix I(*b*), No. XVIII]. In this village 50 per cent. of the land has been transferred by private sale during the last 25 years A large number of Bhumijes in this area were Ghatwals The police service they rendered for their lands has been done away with, and their villages were assessed to rent instead, and settled about ten years ago with the Ghatwals. Previous to the settlement these lands were not transferable, but now they are passing into the hands of *mahajans*.

The statement given below shows the rate of mutation in some typical cases of Ghatwali lands from Bhumij to non-Bhumij within the last 10 years —

Village where land is held	Ghat	Name of Ghatwal or Tabedar	Area originally in possession			Area lost by private sale for debt			Area lost in auction sale for the arrears of rent		Area lost in auction sale for debt	REMARKS.
			B.	C	CH	B	C	CH	B	C		
Narkoli .	Kajalkunra	Nanderchand (Sirdar)	859	7	8	859	7	8				*Columns 4 and 5* —Cultivated as well as *patit* lands (this remark covers this and the following eight rows)
Ditto	Ditto	Kanhai (Tabedar)	44	1	8	41	1	8				
Ditto .	Ditto	Ramcharan (Tabedar).	44	7	12	44	7	12			...	
Ditto ...	Ditto	Hidu (Tabedar).	49	5	12	43	5	4	...			
Damdi ..	Ditto	Balai (Tabedar).	17	11	8	12	2	8	...		...	
Do ..	Ditto	Jadu (Tabedar).	19	2	0	19	2	0				
Jhhatipahari	Ditto	Chamah (Sardar)	18	6	8	......			18	6½	...	
Gopinathpur	Mehradih	Bipin (Sardar)	29	18	0	29	18	0			.	
Ditto ...	Ditto	Pelu (Sardar)	29	18	0	29	18	0	...		...	
Ditto ...	Ditto	Bhasat (Tabedar).	140	6	0	17	10	12	...			*Column 4* —The cultivated area out of the amount is only 38 bighas 6 cot , the land lost is a portion of the cultivated area
Baurndiha	Mashasa	(Bara) Hriday (Tabedar)	72	10	4	22	10	0	..		.	*Column 4* —The cultivated area is only 46 bighas 7 cottas 4 dhans, out of which the amount shown in column 5 has been lost
Ditto	Do.	Aukhay (Tabedar)	118	11	0	37	0	0	...		...	*Column 4* —The cultivated area is only 59 bighas, 1½ cottas, of which the amount transferred forms part
Deuli ..	Deuli .	Chandi (Tabedar)	83	9	12	19	0	0			...	*Column 4* —The cultivated area is only 56 bighas 3 cattahs 12 dhans The land lost is a portion of the same
Do. ...	Do	Lakkhan (Tabedar)	34	2	0	13	13	0			..	*Column 4* —The cultivated area is only 29 bighas 13 cottas The land lost is a portion of it.

There are many other Bhumij ex-Ghatwals who have lost lands in the same way. General inquiry shows that most of those who have not yet transferred their land are already indebted, and have mortgaged their lands in the same way as the Sonthals have.

The statement below shows how the Bhumij Mandali right has fared in selected estates :—

		Number of villages with Bhumij Mandals.
Shyamsundarpur (Court of Wards for Raja Sir Sourendra Mohan Thakur).	1892	... 3
	1909	... 2
Ambikanagore ditto ditto	1884	... 4
	1909	
Gisborne and Company (Raipur) ..	1884	
	1909	

The position of the Bhumijes is the same as that of the Sonthals, and anything done for the Sonthals must be extended to the Bhumijes also in Bankura.

205. *Deswali Sonthals.*—These are Hinduised Sonthals, or half-Sonthals, as they are called by the Sonthals. They worship the gods and goddesses of the Hindus, and can neither talk nor understand Sonthali. The Sonthals regard them as of inferior caste. No Sonthali woman will eat in their houses, but a Deswali women can eat food cooked by a Sonthal. Apparently they used to have the following office-bearers amongst them —

(1) Mandal, the headman.
(2) Laiya, the priest.
(3) Kotal, the messenger
(4) Paramanick, a menial (probably of the priest)

The Mandal is always the Laiya. The Laiya is generally descended from the old Mandal in a broken village; he is generally the only office-bearer left in the village now The office-bearers used to have *man* lands. The position of these half Sonthals is no better than that of the Sonthals proper [*e.g.*, village Akhuta in the Appendix I(*b*), No. XXII] Their numbers are few, but unknown, possibly they were classed as Sonthals during the Census.

206. *Kodas.*—Their numbers are small, but their position is similar to that of the Sonthals [*e.g.*, Kumarbahal in the Appendix I(*b*), No. XXI].

207. *Semi-aborigines, Bhuiyas* —Like the Sonthals, the Bhuiyas are in a small number of villages the original clearers of the soil, but their number is very limited. They live in Sonthal, Bhumij and Hindu villages.

In the Ambicanagare and Raipur (Messrs. Gisborne & Co) Estates there used to be three Bhuiya Mandals in 1884; now they have lost their rights, and there is only one village partly held by a Bhuiya Mandal. Their position in Khatra is even worse, if it could be, than that of the Sonthals. Rajasol [Appendix I(*b*), No. XIX] is a typical village. The Bhuiyas have lost about 83 per cent. of their lands in this village during the last twenty-five years. In Chhatna only two small villages of Phuiyas were discovered, whose ancestors had been the original clearers of the soil. All the land they had, had been transferred to the money-lender, and the Bhuiyas are at present daily labourers.

208. *Bauris.*—The population of Bauris in Bankura is very large. I do not pretend to have made any inquiry into their condition. In most places the majority appear to be labourers with no land of their own. They have followed the Dikkus into the villages, and earn their livelihood by working in their fields. But in Khatra thana a few of them are the original clearers of the soil, like the Sonthals, and in those villages that were examined they were losing lands in a manner like the Sonthals [*e g.*, Banini in the Appendix I(*b*), No. XX]. In a few villages there were also Bauri Mandals. I understand that on the whole the Bauris have not lost their land at such a rate as the Sonthals have, because they are known to be desperate men.

209. *Kurmis.*—These are semi-aborigines in this district. They are to be found principally in Raipur and Khatra thanas, where they number 8,619 and 5,190 respectively. They are regarded by the Sonthals as superior in caste to themselves. I have no particular information regarding their position.

210. *Khereyas.*—This tribe appears to have escaped separate enumeration at the census in this district. I give below the following interesting report of the Kanango Maulvi Ekramuddin on this tribe:—

The most aboriginal race in the district. They live in the midst of jungles. Sometimes only one, but generally two or three, and seldom more than six or seven families live in one place. They make very small huts with branches of trees to live in, and thatch them with

leaves of trees, using creepers as ropes. They lie down upon the bare ground, and never use any coat or wrapper even in winter. They eat food in vessels made of leaves of trees, and make fire by rubbing one piece of wood against another. Their males are said to have been naked, and the females half-naked about fifty years ago. The latter used to cover only a part of their body with leaves of trees.

Even 15 or 20 twenty years ago they lived solely upon boiled roots of some creepers and fruits of trees of the jungles. The sight of men frightened them, and they avoided all men, civilised or aboriginal, and have even been known to have fled away, leaving their houses when they confronted a man near their houses. They used to come to villages only rarely on *hât* days, and stand by the side of an unfrequented pathway to procure from a passer-by, or from those who know their habits, the bare necessaries of life, such as salt, etc., in exchange for the honey they collected in jungles in vessels of leaves.

Even now his most favourite and common food is the boiled roots of some creepers, and his occasional food fruits of trees, though he takes rice at least once a day, when available. Though he frequents the villages now-a-days to work for others on wages, he is confounded when he sees a man near his house, and invariably turns upon his back, if found by somebody while digging earth for the roots they eat, for reasons unknown. They seldom appear, if sent for; as I have tried and failed.

As they often require to sharpen their shovel for digging out the roots, they have to do the blacksmith's work themselves, and they manage the business with bellows prepared of leaves of trees, which I found to be in good working order when I visited their house. Their women can prepare very fine mattresses, which they sell in neighbouring villages, but never use them themselves. They still sell pure honey collected in jungles. A few of them have recently been making mud-houses, instead of houses of trees, and thatching them with straw.

Only one or two families live in one jungle; and when the family grows, some of them remove to a new jungle, probably because they fear the scarcity of food-roots, if many live together.

There are also Deshwali, of Hinduised Khereyas, who live in Hindu villages. But neither inter-marriage nor any social intercourse is prevalent between the Khereya and the Deshwali Khereya.

But the Khereyas are very small in number, and are nowhere the original clearers of the soil of any village. A few of them have recently taken to turning a few lands of the jungle under cultivation.

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Thana.	Population.			
	Bhumij.	Kurmi.	Bhuiya.	Munda
Jhargram	4,304	17,966	1,492	..... .
Binpur	7,104	8,846	2,528	483
Salbani	4,003	12,130	1,849	2
Garhbeta	752	3,541	646	......
Gopiballabhpur	19,220	15,426	2,114	16

211. *Aborigines, Bhumijes.*—The proportion of Bhumijes is large, particularly in thana Gopiballabhpur. There is practically nothing to distinguish their condition from that of the Sonthals. In the south of the district that section of the Bhumijes who have not forgotten their own language *Thar*, and have not been influenced by Dikkus, predominate. The majority of those that I found called themselves Patkumia Mundas, and took their dead to their ancestral *sasmdiri* (burial ground of erect gravestones) in their original home in Patkum. They have a *dheri* for a priest, and call themselves *Singh*. Those in Nayabasan are mainly Nagpuria Mundas. There they call their headman a *bhalbhai*, and his assistant a *behara*. Examples of dispossession and indebtedness are to be found in the Appendix. The remarks on the Sonthals apply more or less to this tribe throughout. In chapters 2, 3 and 4 information has been given regarding this tribe in dealing with Nayabasan and Rohini.

212. *Mundas.*—There are only a few of this aboriginal tribe in the south-west of Binpur. Their condition is reported to be even worse than the condition of any one else, and nothing can be done to save them. In one village (Pachapan) [Appendix I(c), No. X] they had lost 220 bighas out of 270. There is no reason for making any distinction between them and the Sonthals.

213. *Semi-aborigines, Bhuiyas.*—No particular investigation was made into the condition of the Bhuiyas. They have been mentioned in chapters 2, 3 and 4;

I have no particular evidence showing that their case demands much attention, though I am not sure if a case cannot be made out for them.

214. *Kurmis.*—The figures show that there is a very large proportion of the semi-aboriginal caste of Kurmi Mahtos in the Jungle Mahals. But that they are in any way in the same position as the Sonthals is rather doubtful. The discussion in chapters 3 and 4 as to how the headman system has fared, and the rate of mutation amongst them in Nayabasan and Rohini, shows they are much better off. (Appendix No. III(c)) The Civil Court returns also warrant the same conclusion. South of the Subarnarekha, the direction of mutation is from the Sonthals to the Kurmi Mahto, and the latter is the *mahajan*. Such a condition of affairs puts page 31 the Kurmi at once on a higher plane so far as land is concerned. That they have a greater force of resistence to the *mahajan* is evidenced by the fact that in Salbani, 12 out of 35 Kurmi villages examined are still held by a Kurmi ijaradar (in 15 of those villages the ijara was sold up for debts or for rent, in one surrendered, and in 8 it is not known how it was lost). But in Garhbeta, so far as the headman system is concerned, the Kurmi Mahtos are very nearly as badly off as the Sonthals. In 24 villages examined, in which there had been a Kurmi headman, in only one village does it now exist, in 13 of these villages the ijaradari right had been sold. This is possibly the worst aspect in the condition of the Kurmis. To arrive at a definite conclusion that the Kurmis required protection, would necessitate a further inquiry. Suffice it that so far as the present inquiry has shown, I am of opinion they are in a much better position than the Sonthals, and that there is very little evidence that such an inquiry is necessary.

BALASORE

215. There are 1,381 Bhumijes and 785 Kodas in Jellasore, whose position is similar to that of the Sonthals.

GENERAL

216. My inquiry into other tribes and castes was limited, because the examination of all the different tribes and castes would have involved an inquiry extending over a much longer period than was at my disposal. But I am of opinion that anything done for the Sonthals should be extended to the Page 72 Kodas in Birbhum; to Bhumijes, Kodas and Bhuiyas in Bankura; to Bhumijes, Mundas and Kodas in Midnapore, and to Bhumijes and Kodas in Balasore. It may be that any legislation that may be undertaken should be extended to other tribes in these areas, but it is only with regard to the above tribes that I can speak with certainty. I have not mentioned Deswali Sonthals, as I include them under the heading of Sonthals. Should any legislation be undertaken, it can easily be framed so as include any other castes or tribes which the Collectors of the different districts, or which subsequent settlements, may show should be included. For a complete list, a settlement must be awaited.

CHAPTER XIII.

GENERAL FEELING.

(Terms of the Reference No. XI.)

BIRBHUM

217. *Alien raiyats.*—In the chapter on population it has been shown how the Sonthal generally avoids the alien as much as possible, and only associates in the villages with other aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes. This is due in some degree to the fact that he knows that he is too weak to struggle against the alien by himself. The feeling is one of dislike; not active dislike, but more

akin to indifference. As they say, they work for the alien and they talk with him, but they much prefer his room to his company. This feeling has no political importance.

218. *Zamindars.*—The feeling against the zamindars in this area seems to be part and parcel of the intense ill feeling against the *mahajans*; because there are so many of the former who are also *mahajans*. The Sonthal does, however, distinguish between them and admits that it is the *mahajan* that he dislikes most. In fact, in a few cases the Sonthals admitted that they were well treated by their zamindar, or "Raja" as they always call him, be he a petty trader or a large proprietor. Their main objection to the zamindars is that the latter have raised their rents. As has been shown in Chapter VII, there can be no doubt that the proprietors have raised the rents for excess cultivation beyond the rates they are entitled to, but it is quite possible that in a number of cases an accurate measurement will show that rents are not unduly high.

Their other objections are to being sold up for arrears of rent, to their crops being forcibly taken for rent, and to the realisation of gomashta-cess. They do not seem to regard *bethbegar* and exactions by the proprietor's *amla* as of much account. These they accept generally as facts, without comment, if the proprietor is not a *mahajan*. In other words, they have an innate feeling of loyalty to the landlord proper.

219 *Mahajans.*—But it is against the *mahajan* that the most intense ill-feeling is displayed. The Sonthals state, and with perfect truth, that the *mahajans* lend them money only with the view of ultimately obtaining possession of their lands. The *mahajan* will very rarely make an arrangement with them by which they can pay off their debts in yearly instalments of grain, but he turns the debt into money, which to the Sonthal is the last straw before final dispossession. The *mahajan* inaccurately records their repayments He uses a different measure for payments and repayments.

Another of their contentions is that the *mahajan* deceives them by getting them to execute documents which they are told are mortgages but which are really sales. In isolated cases this may happen, what is generally true is that the *mahajan* insists on a sale instead of a mortgage, which the Sonthal finally has reluctantly to agree to. Another contention is that the *mahajans* commit forgeries. This is not confined to their dealings with Sonthals The *mahajan* gives the Sonthal a lower price for his land than he should On the other hand, the Sonthal borrows from whomsoever and when he can. The Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud says that the Sonthal now tries to cheat the *mahajan* even out of his just dues. It is difficult to define what are the just dues of the *mahajan*, and a preferable statement of the facts would be that the Sonthal has been goaded into trying to cheat the *mahajan* out of his unjust dues.

220. This feeling against the *mahajan* and incidentally against the *mahajan* zamindar is intense It has however to a certain extent been engineered The Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud points out that it has been engineered by Durga Manjhi, of Thakurpara, and Brojo Manjhi, of Salunga, two of his raiyats, whose personal characters he disparages. This is undoubtedly the case. Durga Manjhi, though sent in by Mr. Skrefsrud, the very day I arrived at Rampur Hât, on a charge of extortion, the same day tried unsuccessfully to get a relation of his appointed as my interpreter, or, in default, as my *chaprasi*. Durga Manjhi is the Perganait of Rampur Hât thana and he has had a good education. He has a wily tongue and the Sonthals of the neighbourhood obviously look to him as their leader. He has taken the foremost place in the present movement. In December 1906 he submitted a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor, who was going to Dumka. This petition was repeated in February 1907 and again towards the end of the same year, praying for a settlement, and also for the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Sonthals in the Sonthal Parganas. Meanwhile Mr. Foster had enquired into and reported on the subject. Subsequently a kanungo, Maulvi Ekramuddin, was ordered to make a further enquiry. Later the Commissioner of Burdwan himself held an enquiry and as a result recommended a general enquiry into the condition of all the Sonthals in the Burdwan Division, as the question was of more general importance. Now the present enquiry has been concluded. Two influences have thus been at work. The first is that of Durga Manjhi, who has been busy manufacturing ill-feeling and stirring the Sonthals up to a sense of their grievances. The second is that

Page 1.

the people are now in a state of expectation that Government is going to do something for them. Time after time I tried to explain that Government would not give them back the lands they had lost, but it was useless. They are determined on a settlement.

221. If Government does nothing in this area, then despite Mr. Skrefsrud's assertion that the Sonthals will not rise, I maintain that, given a leader, which they have in Durga Manjhi, no one can be so definite as to say they will not cause trouble. I should be unwilling to pledge myself to a definite statement either way. They know quite well that the Sonthals in the Sonthal Parganas got all they asked for by rising, and they know that they themselves have already got some concession in 1881 by a little agitation. They possess a simple machinery of Perganaits by which combination can easily be effected. But a settlement will not satisfy them. They want their lands back This is impossible. The only practical way of meeting the case is to forbid transfers in the future.

The above remarks apply to the Rampur Hât subdivision. In the area in the Sadar subdivision I am not aware that such an intense feeling exists The zamindar is disliked if he is a *mahajan* and has taken their lands. In Bolpur there is, I believe, very little feeling at all on the matter, and the zamindars there are not disliked.

BANKURA.

222. Sonthals are friendly with the Bauris and the other aboriginal and semi-aboriginal people with whom they live in their villages. They are indifferent to other Dikkus. The zamindars, if they are not *mahajans*, they do not regard with any animosity; rather they respect and obey them. The *mahajan* they dislike. This enquiry, fortunately or unfortunately, though they were told no lands would be given back to them, "has awakened them up to a sense of their wrongs. Now many of them are indulging in the wildest dreams, and others that appeared quite resigned to their fate a short time ago are now waking up, and even talk of repossessing themselves of the lands that their fathers owned." So I am informed by the Rev. G. E. Woodford of the Sarenga Mission. A *mahajan*, who was about to sell up a Sonthal's land, was murdered a short time ago, before the enquiry began, by a Sonthal. But the feeling has no political significance beyond the fact that the enquiry has raised their hopes. But when an enquiry is made for the purpose of finding out how much land has been lost and of finding out all the grievances of a tribe like the Sonthals, such a result seems inevitable The movement in Birbhum is quite detached from this area.

MIDNAPORE

223. The excitement in Rampur Hât I expected, but it was only in the last two or three days of my stay in Bankura that there appeared signs of interest in the enquiry in that district. Before that they had been more or less apathetic But I thought it advisable to make less detailed enquiries in Midnapore, and the only excitement created was disappointment that I was not distributing agricultural loans—an impression received from the fact that I was enquiring into mortgages. Except in the case of the Raja of Ramgarh, the feeling towards the zamindar is on the whole good, though his *amla* and peons are disliked Sonthals in return are recognised by the zamindar as making the best raiyats they can have and prompt in the payment of rent. The Sonthals regard the other aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes in the district with friendliness, but they avoid the Dikkus and dislike the Dikku money-lender who takes away their land from them, and whom they regard as a cheat. The dislike has no political significance in this district.

BALASORE

224. The Sonthals are indifferent to•the Dikku alien raiyats and will associate only with Kodas, Bhumijes, Pans, and Kamars and such like. The

**Vide* Mr Skrefsrud's letter dated 28th January 1908 to the Collector of Birbhum (A Proceedings No 96 of November 1908) The tone of this letter is very much to be deprecated, and discounts the value considerably of what ought to have been a valuable opinion

raiyats in the 10-anna share of pargana Fatehabad admit that the landlord treats them well. But the *amla* of the 4-anna share appear to have an undue amount of power and are disliked for their land-grabbing methods. *Mahajans* are disliked because they charge such a high rate of interest, which prevents the raiyat repaying the loan and results in the loss of his land.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEGISLATION.

(*Terms of the Reference No. XII.*)

225. The chief reference* on which I am asked to report is whether any legislation should be proposed, taking into account the provisions for the restraint of transfers in other Acts, Bengal and Foreign, *e.g.*, Sonthal Parganas Regulations, new Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, and Punjab and Bombay Acts. The answer to this question is, I submit, an emphatic affirmative. Legislation is required to prevent transfers of land to money-lenders and grain-dealers, to maintain the communal system of the aborigine, to regulate his dealings with money-lenders and thereby incidentally to prevent the formation of a debased and possibly criminal, wandering, labouring population, into which the Sonthals are drifting, out of a race of hereditary cultivators, hitherto honest, merry and law-abiding. My report, I venture to think, shows that this legislation must be aimed primarily against (1) *mahajans* and (2) *mahajans* as landlords, and in a less degree against the legitimate landlord. So far as the landlord proper is concerned, it is more with a view to maintaining the communal system intact that legislation is required, than with a view to protecting him against eviction. But the power for evil of the *mahajan* landlord class is so great and this class is so prevalent that, in an effort to protect the aborigine against it, it may be that matters will be made a little irksome for the good landlord. The proposals that I first had in mind interfered very largely with the rights of the zamindar under the Bengal Tenancy Act. I have now considerably modified these proposals down to a minimum of interference. Some interference cannot very well be helped, without relaxing, to a very large extent, the provisions against *mahajan*-landlords—a class of persons who give no mercy and deserve none. At the end of this chapter my proposals will be found in the form of a skeleton draft Bill. It will be observed that, however retrogade the proposals may seem, there is chapter and verse for each section, not only in one part of India, but in several other parts of India. The provisions are therefore by no means new. The evidence of their necessity is contained in my report. In this connection I must deprecate the use of the word "retrograde." We are here dealing with a tribe or tribes whom legislation has long ago outstripped, and it is, I venture to think, necessary to go back a step or two in dealing with them. Perhaps it is not necessary to meet the argument that the proposals interfere with freedom of contract, because that is actually what has never existed and does not exist in the relations of the aborigine with the Aryan. They do interfere, in an attempt to adjust the balance of these relations. They also interfere very considerably with credit. But my report shows that it is credit which is the ruin of the aborigine; no untoward results appear to have been brought to light in Chota Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas where credit is restricted. Though credit is restricted, stress must be laid on one point which is apt to be overlooked in dealing with the prohibition of the alienation of land, and that is, that the prohibition does not extend to the *alienation of the crop* or a fixed amount of the grain for even a term of years. The proposals are for the most part permissive. It will rest with the Collector to see that the aborigine is maintained in the possession of his land.

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Pages 82 87
Page 91 (Recommendation No 1)

The following paragraphs contain some slight discussion as to the draft proposals.

226. *Preliminary section 1 (3).*—This sub-section follows section 4 of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act (XIII of 1900). The only practical difference

* The policy that it is the duty of Government to protect the weaker Indian races from extinction has, I believe, been long established. In Canada where Red Indians are like the Sonthals in the Sonthal Parganas kept in a reserve, this policy of protection has led to the best results.

between the sections is that the words "aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes" take the places of the words "agricultural tribes or groups of agricultural tribes" of the Punjab Act. It is necessary to limit the application of the proposals to such tribes and to such areas as experience or enquiry reveals or proves should be covered by them

Page 68
If adopted, the Act should be extended at once to the following tribes and following areas —

Page 91 (Recommendation No. 2)

Birbhum	..	Sonthals and Kodas
Bankura	...	Sonthals, Bhumijes, Kodas, and Bhuiyas
Midnapore	...	Sonthals, Bhumijes, Mundas, and Kodas
Balasore	. .	Sonthals, Bhumijes and Kodas

Page 91 (Recommendation No. 3)
It should be extended to other tribes to whom the Collector may prove or a settlement may disclose that it is necessary to extend it. In the progress of the settlements that have been ordered under the 24 years' programme, the question of its extension to other smaller aboriginal and semi-aboriginal tribes might be made the subject of special enquiry.

Page 91 Recommendation Nos. 1 and 1)
It should probably be extended to Bhagalpur, Monghyr, and Purnea. The Settlement Officer, Bihar, would, I understand, be inclined to recommend its extension to some of these districts The Sonthals in Murshidabad should not be excluded from consideration, and the Collector might be consulted regarding them. As to the Eastern Province, I would strongly recommend that its attention should be drawn to the matter probably the condition of the Sonthals in the Barind is as bad as elsewhere.

Section 2 (1) — The Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, defines in section 3 (ii) a "*bhugut bandha*" mortgage. This term is not used in the area under enquiry, and I have therefore taken the liberty of inventing another term "complete usufructuary mortgage" for this kind of mortgage, as there does not appear to be another distinctive name for it.

Section 2 (2) —A definition of a village headman appears to be necessary for the purposes of the proposal. It has been framed so as to cover all the different kinds that have been discovered in the course of the enquiry, or it is conceivable may occur. In the Sonthal Parganas a village headman is not a tenure holder, and it is an official heresay to regard him as such In

Chapter III
Balasore he is little more than a tahsildar, in Bankura and North Midnapore he is a tenure-holder, and in Birbhum he is a *quasi*-tenure holder. The definition thus overlaps the definition of a tenure-holder, but as the proposals go, this does not appear to be a matter of much consequence

Section 2 (3).—This sub-section has been framed merely with the purpose of preventing the reiteration of the words "aboriginal or semi-aboriginal"

227. *Private Transfers—Holdings—Sections 3, 4, and 5* —Practically the whole report deals with this subject The evidence produced shows that, if nothing is done to check the transfer of land by the aborigine, in a few years he will be dispossessed of all the land that he has reclaimed from the jungle. Though, as in South Bankura, he may still be kept on the soil,

Pages 28 29, 31
as a under raiyat or non-occupancy raiyat on a produce rack-rent, the time will come when the *mahajan* can even there do without him and the Sonthal will become merged in the large labouring population.

All the officials who have made a study of this matter, that I have come across, are unanimous in their opinion that transfers by the Sonthals to *mahajans* should be prevented Missionaries like the Revd. L. O Skrefsrud of the Benegaria Mission (on the borders of Birbhum) and the Revd G. A Woodford of the Sarenga Mission (Bankura) are of the same opinion Such is, I understand, also the opinion of the Revd. A. L. Kennan of the Bhimpur Mission (Midnapore) But Mr Gregson, Manager of the Midnapore Zamindari Company, in common with the Revd G. Woodford, is of opinion that legislation of the kind ought really to have been undertaken some thirty years ago. There can be little doubt that the proposal in some cases is akin to a suggestion to shut the stable door after the horse has gone, but there are still plenty of lands to be saved from the

Page 31
mahajan, more particularly in areas like the south of Gopiballabhpur, where the *mahajan* has not as yet made his influence felt to such an extent as in other places.

Besides the considerations that the aborigine must be protected against his own thriftlessness and against the methods and sharp practices of the *mahajan*, there is another consideration which gives him a strong claim to the protection of Government. In the vast majority of cases the land the aborigine still cultivates was made by his ancestors out of the virgin jungle. It is not as if the lands the aborigine held were merely raiyati lands, made and originally ploughed by persons of whom there is no trace now-a-days. Were it not for him or his ancestors, the Jungle Mahals of Bengal would still be a large uncultivated area, and, except for the gains from forest produce, a barren source of profit to the zamindar. The rights of absolute possession that accrue by "the first stroke of the plough" are, I believe, in most countries respected. That is the right of the aborigine, and on this ground he is entitled to protection. But the Bengal Tenancy Act knows nothing of these rights: if the aborigine has been in possession for less than twelve years, he is still a non-occupancy raiyat, unless there is a custom to the contrary. Pages 4, 6-7, 9, 11.

Such being the case, the aborigine cannot be regarded as an immigrant, whose rights have to give way to persons who were there before him. I have already been at some pains to show that he is no more an immigrant than the Dikku. Though now in point of population the percentage of aborigines or semi-aborigines may only just exceed 50 per cent. in even the most densely populated aboriginal portion of the area under enquiry, yet in some thanas* the Sonthals and the Bhumijes largely outnumber any other class taken individually. In the neighbourhood of Silda in Midnapore the Sonthals still account for about 35 per cent. of the population, and they undoubtedly opened up that portion of the country. Colonel Dalton gives this place (*alias* Santbhui) as the latest home from which the Sonthals colonised; yet it is not here, but in the Sonthal Parganas, that the Sonthals have been protected. Page 10

The idea of preventing transfers of land is by no means new. In the Sonthal Parganas they are prohibited by the record-of-rights, and the sanction for such a prohibition is contained in section 27 of Regulation III of 1872 as amended by Regulation III of 1908. In Chota Nagpur, transfers of land under section 46 of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act are forbidden within certain limits, transfers of Mundari Khuntkatti tenures, which, in that those are held by the first clearers (or their descendants) of the soil, are similar to the tenures held by aborigines in Bengal, are forbidden by Chapter XVIII of the same Act. In the Central Provinces, transfers by occupancy raiyats and ordinary tenants are forbidden by section 46 and 70, respectively, of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act, 1898, and a sanction for the prohibition is provided by sections 47 and 71 of the same Act. In the Punjab, the alienation of land by members of agricultural tribes has been forbidden by Act XIII of 1900. There is thus plenty of precedent for the prevention of alienation of land.

Considering that the area inhabited by the aborigines and semi-aborigines in Bengal borders the Sonthal Parganas and Chota Nagpur, it naturally follows that legislation should follow the lines adopted in those areas, subject to the different forms the administration and legislation already in force take and other peculiarities found to exist in this area. In drafting sections 3, 4 and 5 the provisions of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act have been followed with three modifications.

The first modification is the introduction of the prohibition to under-raiyats. This is most important in view of the facts that in a number of areas the headman is regarded as a raiyat and his raiyats as under-raiyats; and in other areas like Bankura the *mahajan*-landlord deems himself a raiyat and the Sonthals under him under-raiyats. The omission to protect under-raiyats would thus make the provisions of the law nugatory in such cases, and would leave an obvious method of evasion open to both the Sonthal and the *mahajan*. Pages 17, 19, 45.

The second and third modifications are (1) that no provision is made for a mortgage for five years, and (2) that provision has not been made for a lease for five years to any one irrespective of tribe or caste, but that provision has been made for a sub-lease to a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe. I shall deal with these modifications in the two succeeding paragraphs.

* Thanas Raipur and Khatra in Bankura, and Binpur and Gopiballabhpur in Midnapore.

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228. *Temporary transfers—Leases—Section 4.*—It is just as necessary to prevent the Sonthal executing a lease of his land to a *mahajan* as to prevent him giving an out and-out transfer of the same. If the latter method of transfer alone is closed, the law can be evaded by the execution of leases. This section has accordingly been drafted so as to allow a raiyat to sublet his land only to another person of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe, just as he can under the Bengal Tenancy Act. I do not quite see the force of allowing a lease for five years to any one, as in the Chota Nagpur Act, because it is necessary to restrict as much as possible the methods by which the aborigine can transfer land, and one method, namely, by a complete usufructuary mortgage for seven years, is provided. In the Central Provinces a sub-lease for one year is allowed in the case of occupancy-tenants.

229. *Temporary transfers—Mortgages—Section 5.*—As already noted, one of the main arguments brought against the prevention of alienation of land is that it ties up credit, but it has been observed that this is exactly what is required in the case of the aborigines, because they have, while they have land, too much credit. But it is necessary to relax this prohibition to some extent. Otherwise in time of famine, even though the alienation of the crop is not forbidden, with barren lands and no credit the result might be disastrous. In the Sonthal Parganas, where usufructuary mortgages are forbidden, this order was relaxed in the famine of 1897. The Punjab Act allows, under certain conditions, a usufructuary mortgage for twenty years. The Chota Nagpur Act allows a usufructuary mortgage for seven years to cover both the principal and interest of the loan. This provision of the Chota Nagpur Act seems to supply all that is required. It would be of no avail to allow a usufructuary mortgage which did not wipe off both the interest and the principal of the debt. But even then the danger exists of a renewal of the usufructuary mortgage. It does not seem practicable to say that it cannot be renewed, all that can be done is to prevent an arrangement being made for its renewal during its pendency. The proposed sections regarding usury should also tend to keep down such mortgages.

The mortgage for five years contemplated by the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act is unnecessary in view of the provision for a complete usufructuary mortgage for seven years. I do not quite understand what this mortgage for five years contemplates. If this is a simple mortgage without possession, it is of no avail so far as land is concerned, as the land cannot be ultimately transferred, even by a Court. If it is a usufructuary mortgage for the interest only, then despite the prohibition to the contrary, there is every chance of a fresh mortgage being executed later to wipe off the debt, and it must be avoided at any cost.

230. *Transfers to members of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe.*—There can be no objection to an aborigine subletting his lands to another aborigine for the *boná fide* purpose of cultivation, but there is an objection to allowing a free right of transfer to another aborigine, because educated aborigines can be as bad as the ordinary a *mahajan* in land matters. Though in only a very few instances have I come across such cases in the area under enquiry, there are notable instances in the Munda country in Chota Nagpur. The Collector need not, unless he thinks fit, interfere in such cases when a *sub rosa* transfer appears to have been a *boná fide* one. But I must admit that the objection against allowing a free right of transfer to another aborigine is not strong and would not press the above objection against it.

231. *Consent of landlord—Section 6.*—This section has been introduced with a view to making it clear that though certain transfers are allowed, yet they are not binding on the landlord unless they are binding as the law at present stands in Bengal. In Chota Nagpur under section 46 (2) of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, such transfers are not binding unless the consent of the landlord is obtained in writing. I am not aware, however, that there is any necessity for changing the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act in this respect.

232. *Sanction for the prevention of alienation—Section 7.*—Experience in the Sonthal Parganas has shown that despite the provisions against transfers, the Sonthal still transfers his land *sub rosa* to the *mahajan*. The present settlement has, I understand, revealed numbers of such cases. The same experience has shown the Sonthal Parganas authorities that the mere

prohibition is not sufficient, but that they must have power to enforce it. For this reason section 27 of Regulation III of 1872 was passed into law last year, allowing the Deputy Commissioner, when it is brought to his notice that a transfer in contravention of the record-of-rights has taken place, in his discretion, to evict the transferee and either restore the transferred land to the raiyat or any heir of the raiyat who has transferred it or to resettle the land with another raiyat, according to the village custom for the disposal of an abandoned holding.

The Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act is silent on such a provision, except, if I understand the Act properly, in the case of a temporary transfer. The Punjab Alienation Act makes certain transfers null and void, but it is not clear how and who is to be put into possession when an illegal transfer comes to light. But the Central Provinces Tenancy Act is clear on the point. The next-of-kin have the prior right and then the landlord to apply to be placed in possession of land illegally transferred. The person who made the transfer is debarred from applying under this section. This seems equitable, but as sales, if declared invalid, will still be instigated by the *mahajan*, it seems unnecessary to rule that the person who made the transfer should be always debarred from obtaining possession. He is not so debarred in the Sonthal Parganas.

If no similar provision is provided in any legislation proposed for Bengal, the prohibition of transfers will have but the slightest restrictive influence. Also, if the Collector does not move on his own initiative, no one will report the transfer, no one will put forward a claim in the Courts—the aborigine avoids the Court as much as possible—and transfers will go on as before. Provision should therefore be made for the Collector acting on his own initiative. In this connection I would invite attention to the emphatic words of Mr. D. J. Macpherson, when Commissioner of Bhagalpur* .—

"The more I contrast the surrounding districts with the Sonthal Parganas, the more convinced do I become of the great evils which have been prevented in the latter through the exercise by the Executive and Settlement Officers of the power to evict outsiders who have acquired the lands of Sonthals and semi-aboriginal tribes in contravention of the provisions of the record-of-rights forbidding the alienation of raiyati holdings I should therefore welcome the adoption of effective means everywhere to preserve the peasantry on their lands But I am equally convinced from experience of the working of the Sonthal Parganas system, that it would be of little use merely to enact a law prohibiting alienation. *There must also be created an executive machinery which will intervene* suo motu *whenever it gets the opportunity, and certainly periodically to see that the law is obeyed and to evict objectionable outsiders who have got hold of the lands of the old cultivators* Over and over again it has been shown that the Sonthal really requires protection by the authorities against himself. It is but the natural consequence of what our laws have done in limiting the rent payable for the lands. The tenant's right in his holding acquires a gradually increasing value, and the greatest possible vigilance is required to prevent him from turning that value to account by mortgaging it to satisfy his immediate wants and desires, and eventually by parting with it altogether by some form of disguised sale This occurs in communal (Pradhani) as well as *khas* zamindari villages in the Sonthal Parganas. Frequently the village headman himself falls into difficulties and has resort to the *mahajan*, who gets a footing in the village with his assistance, and no one ever thinks of saying as to what is going on until the Settlement Officer comes round and enquires what has become of the raiyat who was recorded as holding the land at last settlement."

In drafting section 7 the provisions of section 27 of the Sonthal Parganas Regulation III (1908) have accordingly been followed, with modifications based on the Central Provinces Act. In this section of the Regulation provision has been made for resettling the land with another raiyat according to the village custom. The question of resettlement is discussed in a succeeding paragraph.

233. *Sanction for the prohibition of the extension of a complete usufructuary mortgage—Section 8.*—Such a sanction exists in section 46 (4) of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, but the raiyat must apply and within three years. It has already been pointed out that little good will result, if it is left to the raiyat to apply, and the Collector must be given power to act on his initiative in the matter. A limitation of three years will go a long way to render the sanction futile. The *mahajan* will be willing to take the chance of remaining in possession for three years after the period of his mortgage is up, and the

* His letter No. 96Rct., dated the 5th June 1907.

chances are that the fact will remain undetected until it is either accidentally found out or else a record of-rights prepared. Certainly if a limitation of twelve years is provided in section 6, then the same or a longer period must be provided in section 7. Under a usufructuary mortgage, the *mahajan* can have no right whatsoever to remain in possession, and the limitation of twelve years provided for in section 6 does not apply I have accordingly followed more closely the provisions of section 27 of Regulation III (Sonthal Parganas), omitting the twelve years' limitation, and brought it otherwise into line with proposed section 7.

234. *Transfers, Tenures, and Village Headmen—Sections 9 to 12.*—In the chapter dealing with the village headman it has been shown that the incidents of the tenure held by a village headman vary from place to place, and that the numbers of such headmen is rapidly decreasing, because the aborigine is not protected against the landlord or *mahajan*. It has also been shown that the condition of affairs in an intact village is better than in a broken village, where each raiyat is at the mercy of a grasping *mahajan* or landlord. The large

Pages 16, 18, 19, 20, 21 25, 29, 31, 32, 37, 46, 51 54 &c.

number of villages in which a *mahajan* is the tenure-holder or village headman and the disastrous effects therefrom, point to the necessity of preventing the sales of such rights to *mahajans* with still greater force than in the case of raiyati rights.

But there are two other grounds on which the village headship* should be rendered an inalienable right. It has been remarked by officers experienced in the ways of the Sonthals that the village community is socially the unit amongst the Sonthals, not the individual. The tendency in all legislation is to have regard to the individual and not to the village community, and therefore, so far as the Sonthal is concerned, starts on a wrong basis. Amongst

Page 13

the Sonthals, the village system with the Manjhi, as the head of the village community, as its representative with all outsiders and the medium through whom the village rents are paid to the landlord, and with the other village officials with their different spiritual, moral and temporal duties, is an essential part of their national life. It has, it is true, broken down to some extent owing to

Chapter III

the force of circumstances, and the Manjhi as the purveyor of the rents in the large majority of cases has ceased to exist, but the Sonthals still retain their Manjhi, Jogmanjhi, Naiki and Gorait, even though the different posts are often

Pages 22, 23.

duplicated. The only area I came across in which the headmanship was regarded with indifference was in the south of Midnapore, where the Manjhis gave it up voluntarily or it had ceased to exist long ago. This must not be taken as indicative of the general feeling regarding the manjhiship—far from it. That it is so in this area is due to two facts *first*, that the Sonthals are under large and good landlords, and *secondly*, that the *mahajans* have never had an opportunity of acquiring the headman's right, which was absolutely untransferable It has been suggested that this is also due to the lack of profits from the settlement of waste lands. But though the headman is suppposed to make a profit, it is only in isolated areas that he does so. The Sonthals there have therefore little practical cause to regret the loss of the manjhiship, but I am not sure that some feeling of regret does not exist. Everywhere else the village has come to be broken, the fact was remarked on with regret and resignation, and the Dikku Manjhi regarded with aversion. The system under which the Sonthal pays his rent through a Manjhi to the landlord is thus an ancient, national and valued custom. Such a custom must be good law, and it is the province of law to see that such a law is not interfered with by laws which have been framed to provide for quite a different set of facts and customs. In other words, the law should provide for the protection of the village headship.

The second ground is that in villages held by village headmen the waste land is settled by the headmen with the Sonthal, and there is thus provision for increase of population. This, I understand, is one of the reasons why Sonthals are so keen to keep Dikkus out of intact villages, so that the necessary amount of land may be provided for their children. It seems desirable that Government should maintain this method of providing for the increase of population.

**Cf.* Report of the Royal Commission upon decentralization paragraph 239 "We do not think it possible, even if it were expedient, to restore the ancient village system, under which the community was responsible for each of its members, and in turn claimed the right to regulate to his actions" in its place they recommend panchyats. The Commission however appear to approve the communal system

Though the village system amongst them is not so elaborate, the same remarks, so far as the village headman is concerned, apply equally to the Mundas, Bhumijes and other allied tribes. Chapter XII.

In dealing with the village headman, precedent is provided by the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, section 65A, and by the sections dealing with Mundari Khuntkattidars in the Chota Nagpur Act. The first Act only protects headmen who have been in possession of the tenure for twenty years or more, then forbids all transfers, but allows ejectment for arrears of rent or because the tenure has been mismanaged in certain ways. The Chota Nagpur Act forbids all transfers except a usufructuary mortgage, but allows attachment by the Deputy Commissioner for the realization of arrears of rent. There appears to be no valid reason why in Bengal protection should be restricted as in the Central Provinces Act, but protection should be given absolutely. It follows that the village headman's right must be unresumable

In drafting these sections I have accordingly followed the provisions of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act relating to Mundari Khuntkattidars, together with the permission to sublet provided for therein to members of aboriginal and semi-aboriginal tribes. I have not allowed a complete usufructuary mortgage of a tenure or of a village headman's right of collecting rents to a *mahajan*, but only of the land in the possession of the tenure-holder or village headman, as *primâ facie* the mortgage of the right to collect rents to a mahajan is undesirable from any point of view.

235. *Section 13—Village Headman.*—This section has been introduced from section 65A of the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act to make it clear that, however temporary the arrangement as to rent may be, the right of the tenure-holder or village headman is heritable and shall devolve on his heirs according to custom. This is, as a matter of fact, the custom in Bengal. In some cases, as in Bankura, the Mandali right has become divisible, but one man is as a rule responsible for the payment of the rent where the village is intact. On renewal of the settlement with the headman in the Central Provinces, the rent is fixed by the Deputy Commissioner, if it is disputed. This particular provision does not seem feasible in Bengal proper Chapter III. Page 18.

236. *Registration and Recognition of illegal transfers—Section 14.*—It naturally follows that if private transfers are forbidden, they should not be registered or recognised as valid by any Court—Civil, Criminal or Revenue. Precedent for this is provided by the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, sections 46 (3) and 240 (6), the Punjab Alienation Act, sections 17 (1) and 17 (2), the Sonthal Parganas Regulation III of 1908, section 27 (2), and the Central Provinces Tenancy Act, sections 46 (5) and 70 (5). The Chota Nagpur Act and the Sonthal Parganas Regulation have accordingly been followed.

237. *Transfers effected previous to proposed legislation—Section 15.*—It is clear that the proposed sections regarding transfer cannot be given retrospective effect, however desirable that may be. But provision has to be made for stating from what date transfers should be invalid. This section supplies this. I have left the actual date blank, but would suggest that if any legislation of the land is adopted, the date should be put back as far as possible. There can be little doubt that the *mahajan* will come to know that something of the kind is under contemplation, if any legislation is actually discussed, and will make arrangements to get the Sonthals' lands transferred to them as soon as possible. The proposed section follows section 46 (5) of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act.

238. *Abandoned land—Section 16.*—There is no particular precedent for this section, but it is a favourite habit of the Sonthal, when he has become so indebted to the *mahajan* as to make the sale of his lands immediately inevitable, to run away and leave them in the hands of the *mahajan*. I am also informed that surrender is the favourite mode of evading the provisions of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act regarding alienation of land in Chota Nagpur. In order therefore to prevent this, and in order to prevent the *mahajan* compelling the Sonthal to abandon his land to him, this section has been drafted to give the Collector power to act when he has reason to believe that the land has been abandoned in this way and to restore either the original raiyat or to place another aborigine or semi-aborigine of the village in possession of the land.

239. *Settlement by the Collector of illegally transferred holdings or tenures, etc.—Sections 7 and 12.*—So far it has been plain sailing. I have, however, experienced some difficulty in evolving a plan for resettling illegally transferred land. In the Central Provinces, the Deputy Commissioner, if he does not hand over the land to the next of kin of the transferor, places the landlord in possession Such a provision is not sufficient for the purposes of keeping the aborigine or semi-aborigine on the soil, and it is accordingly necessary to adopt some means for settling the land, if it is not settled with the next of kin or with the original transferor, with an aborigine or semi aborigine. On the other hand, in the Sonthal Parganas the law is that the Deputy Commissioner shall resettle the land, if he does not hand it back to the transferor or his heirs, with another raiyat according to the village custom for the disposal of an abandoned holding. These customs are recorded in the record-of rights and they are, generally speaking, as follows. In villages in which there is a village headman the rule is that the land shall be settled by the village headman with one or other of the following persons, giving preference in the order named.—

(1 with a resident *jamabandi* raiyat of the same community as the transferor,
(2) with himself, if resident, or with a resident *jamabandi* raiyat of a different community;
(3) with himself, if non-resident, or with a non-resident *jamabandi* raiyat;
(4) with a non-*jamabandi* raiyat.

In a *khas* village, the landlord settles the land with one or other of the following, giving preference in the order mentioned :—

(1) with a resident *jamabandi* raiyat of the same community as the transferor,
(2) with a resident *jamabandi* raiyat of a different community,
(3) with a non-resident *jamabandi* raiyat,
(4) with himself, or with a non-*jamabandi* raiyat.

In both cases, if a settlement is made with other than a resident *jamabandi* raiyat of the same community, the settlement has to be confirmed by a "hakim" or Government officer.

Page 25. Such a custom does not exist in Bengal, though in the Mollarpur estate, I am informed that Sonthals are given the first choice of vacant Sonthali lands. Also these provisions are rather more detailed than is necessary for legislation. On the whole, I am inclined to think that if the Collector is empowered, if he does not settle the land with the transferor or his next of kin, to settle it with an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal raiyat, under-raiyat or resident of the same village, the right of settlement going thereafter to the landlord, that this should be sufficient. Rules similar to those in force in the Sonthal Parganas can be issued by executive authority.

240. *Transfer for a charitable, religious, etc., purpose—Section 17.*—It is obviously necessary and desirable that room should be left for the transfer of land for an educational purpose, or for the purposes of manufacture, etc. The provisions of sections 49 and 241 of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act have accordingly been followed.

241. *Civil Court Transfers—Section 18.*—It is obvious that Civil Court transfers must be forbidden as well as private transfers Precedent for this is provided in the Punjab Alienation Act, section 16 (1), the Central Provinces Tenancy Act, section 46 (2), and section 70 (2), the Dekkhan Agriculturists' Relief Act, section 22, and the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, sections 47 and 240. The necessity for this requires no further argument in the case of ordinary Civil Court sales, but it remains to be seen what should be done—

(1) in the case of mortgages and contracts for the possession of land, already in existence; and
(2) in the case of rent sales, sales for a Government loan, or for a loan under the Co-operative Securities Act.

Pages 24, 28, 31. 242. The case of mortgages and contracts for the possession of land already in existence is most important, because the statistics show that there

must be, and I have found that there are, such a great number of these in existence. If these should all go into the Civil Court and proceed to be turned into out-and-out transfers—a by no means remote contingency—the amount of dispossession of the aborigine will, I am sure, and I hope the superlative adverb will be excused in the circumstances, be enormously increased. It would be futile to suggest that sales in such cases should be forbidden, but every effort should be made to limit them In the later proposals regarding usury, power will be given to the Munsif to go into the question of the amount of the debt *ab initio*, and to order a method of realization other than by the transfer of the land, if it can be so effected. But this is not sufficiently efficacious. It is not the Munsif's duty to regard himself as the protector of any particular class. Such protection can be best secured by transferring the execution of the decree when it is for the transfer of immovable property to the Collector for execution. There is precedent for this in the Chota Nagpur Act, section 240, and in the Dekkhan Agriculturists' Relief Act, section 22. In the first case, when a decree or order has been made for the sale of a Mundari Khuntkatti tenancy, in satisfaction of a debt due under a mortgage which was registered before the commencement of the Act, the sale may be made with the previous sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, provided that if he refuses to sell the land, he has to attach it and make such arrangements as he may consider fit for liquidating the debt. In the Dekkhan Act the Court can empower the Collector to take possession of the property for a period of seven years, though sales are not forbidden in the case of specific mortgages.

But section 68 of the new Code of Civil Procedure, providing for the transfer of certain classes of decrees to the Collector for execution, and the rules in the third Schedule of the Code provide all that is necessary. When the Collector receives a decree for execution transferred under that section, he can, under the third schedule—

(1) proceed as the Civil Court would proceed when the sale of the immoveable property is postponed in order to enable the judgment-debtor to raise the amount of the decree ; or

(2) raise the amount of the decree by letting in perpetuity or for a term. on payment of a premium or by mortgaging the whole or any part of the property ordered to be sold , or

(3) sell the property ordered to be sold or so much thereof as may be necessary

An order under section 68 of the Civil Procedure Code is probably as far as it is practicable to go, in the case of mortgages and contracts already in existence and the section has been drafted accordingly. But executive orders might be issued to the effect that the sale of the property should only be effected when the debt cannot be realized otherwise, and that when the property is let by the Collector in perpetuity or for a term of years or by mortgage, preference should be given to aboriginal or semi-aboriginal lessees of the same village and thereafter to other aborigines or semi-aborignes.

243. *Transfers by rent sales, sales for Government loans, etc.*—In the Acts mentioned above, provision is generally made for excepting rent-sales and sales for Government loans from the general prohibition against Civil Court transfers. When rent sales are not mentioned, eviction or ejectment for rent is allowed by other Acts. But there is one exception in the case of the Mundari khuntkattidars in Ranchi, Chota Nagpur Act). In this case sale is forbidden, but the Deputy Commissioner can attach the land and make what arrangements he likes for the realization of the debt. In the Sonthal Parganas eviction for arrears of rent actually takes place, but the Deputy Commissioner settles the holding with a suitable person, according to the record-of-rights, who pays up the arrears, and if none is forthcoming, settles it with the landlord. Thus the *mahajan*, not being a suitable person, is kept out of the village. I understand that the question whether the settlement with the landlord is only a temporary settlement until the debt is realized, is likely to be a matter for discussion Though in such circumstances the Sonthals in the Sonthal Parganas cannot be used as an argument, the fact that the landlords in the Munda country in Chota Nagpur cannot acquire the

lands of their tenants, is a direct precedent. The provision in Chota Nagpur has for a basis the fact that the Mundas cleared and made the land themselves. Amongst the Sonthals and other aborigines in Bengal such a basis also exists It remains to be seen whether there is any definite evidence for the necessity of such a provision in Bengal. The evidence in the case of holdings is that, except in a few estates, whenever a Sonthal is a sold up for rent, he loses the land altogether, the landlord or *mahajan* buying it either cultivates it himself or gives it out to a Dikku who can afford a larger rent or to a Sonthal only on a high produce rack-rent. Also such a large number of tenures and village headships, particularly in the south of Bankura are in the hands of *mahajan*-landlords, who, if this method of obtaining direct possession of the land is only left open, will resort to it more and more to obtain the land. In the case of rent sales of tenures or village headships the case is stronger, because the result of a tenure or village headship going into the hands of a *mahajan* is disastrous; all the best lands ultimately find their way into his hands and the Sonthals become his servants When such village headships are regarded as raiyati holdings, a rent-sale means the dispossession of all the Sonthals of the village. Against this it may be argued that statistics show that rent sales at present are not very common This is so. But if other sales except rent sales are forbidden, rent sales will remain as the only legal means by which a mahajan can obtain possession. As landlord, he will omit to collect his rents properly, leave the Sonthals in arrears of rent, and sell him up, most probably *ex-parte*. As *mahajan*, he will not supply the Sonthal with the means to pay his rent, or will come to a collusive arrangement with the landlord, and then step in, in either case, as a purchaser at the sale In such a contingency rent-sales are bound, I take it, to increase; lands will still go into the hands of the Dikkus, and the prohibition of transfer will lose its effect. Is this evidence sufficient for the prohibition of rent sales altogether? Taken by itself, there is a strong presumption in favour of absolute prohibition, but there are other considerations which must be taken into account. The main one is, of course, that the landlord's rent is jeopardised, and possibly the landlord would argue, therefore the Government revenue. Another is that for many years the landlords in Bengal have had the right of selling up their raiyats. There is, it must be admitted, considerable force in these arguments, and the landlords would doubtless very strongly oppose an absolute prohibition. Therefore, and in order to carry the more important provisions regarding the prohibition of alienation, I should be inclined to suggest a compromise with the landlords in the shape of section 68 of the Civil Court Procedure and the third schedule thereto. A direct precedent is afforded by section 84 of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act. Executive orders might then issue, as in the case of Civil Court sales, to the effect that when the property is mortgaged or let by the Collector, preference should be given to an aborigine or semi-aborigine of the same village and thereafter to other aborigines or semi-aborigines, and that the sale of the property should only be effected as a last resource, when the debt cannot be realized otherwise.

Chapter IV

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...ges 24, 28, 31

The same provisions should apply to Government loans, etc. The section has been drafted accordingly.

244. *Reclamation—Sections 19-21.*—It is a common thing for the zamindars to talk of the encroachment made by the Sonthals as if it were a criminal offence. The Sonthals, on the other hand, always regarded the waste lands within the boundaries of their village as theirs to reclaim. In intact villages this is recognised by the landlords, but, where villages have ceased to be intact, the conflict of opinion occurs. In such broken villages it must however be held that the consent of the landlord is necessary to reclamation, though it is in numbers of villages allowed without such consent, subject to a rent being fixed later. But that is no reason why the landlord should be allowed to withhold his consent for ever, or to tacitly allow cultivation on the understanding that he can charge what rent he likes, or in the alternative evict the trespasser. Though technically a trespasser, the Sonthal has probably done the landlord no harm whatever. The landlord receives an increase of rent at no expense of his own, while the Sonthal has done all the work. The Chota Nagpur Act in dealing with "korkar" supplies the necessary provisions for safeguarding this result of the tenant's labour.

In cases of reclamation of lands occupancy rights should accrue at once as in Chota Nagpur; that should be one of the cultivator's rights as the first clearer of the soil by his unwritten privileges. But in Jhargram the clearers of a village recently reclaimed were recorded in the settlement as having only non-occupancy rights because they had been in possession for less than twelve years. A law which subjects the first clearer of the soil to all the pains and penalties of a non-occupancy right requires amendment.

245. *Under-raiyats.*—In Birbhum it has been noted that in some parts the descendants of the original clearers of the soil were dubbed under-raiyats, and when their leader or headman was sold up for rent, they were all dispossessed. In Bankura also there was a tendency amongst the proprietors to regard the Sonthals as under-raiyats and to give them no receipts To them the fact that the Sonthal is an under-raiyat means that he has no right of occupancy. But it is perfectly patent that an under-raiyat, if he is the original clearer of the soil or a descendant of such a person, should have a right of occupancy in the land and that he should have the same rights as a raiyat, provided his original right is still intact. Any Act that is framed should leave no loophole for a *mahajan* or landlord to step in on the ground that a Sonthal is an under-raiyat, if the latter is the clearer of the soil. Section 21 has accordingly been framed to give an under-raiyat, if he is the clearer of the soil, occupancy rights. Page 28 Page 45

246 *Usury**—*Sections 22-25* —The report, I venture to believe, shows that drastic action is necessary as regards usury In these matters there is absolutely no freedom of contract, and the Sonthal is entirely at the mercy of the *mahajan*. For dealing with these questions which go right to the very root of the dispossession and poverty of the Sonthal, there is precedent in the Sonthal Parganas and in the Dokkhan Agriculturists' Relief Act (XVII of 1878). In the Sonthal Parganas, compound interest is forbidden, the total amount of interest on the original loan cannot exceed the amount of that loan, and provision is made for the examination of the account between the raiyat and the *mahajan ab initio*, regardless of intervening contracts. The same provisions occur in the Dokkhan Agriculturists' Relief Act, but are put more elaborately By that Act the Court has also the power to make arrangements for the repayment of a debt by periodical instalments, instead of ordering the sale of mortgaged lands. Such provisions are peculiarly applicable to aborigines, and I have followed the provisions of the Sonthal Parganas Regulation and the Dokkhan Act almost slavishly. One modification deserves attention. Provision has been made for the repayment of a debt by instalments of grain This is for the reason that this method of repayment is more acceptable to the aborigine than any other, and because there is some chance of his repaying the debt in this way, whilst there is little if the debt is turned into money. Provision has already been made for the transfers of decrees for the sale of land mortgaged before the proposed Bill to the Collector. Page 30

247. *Section 26.*—This is taken direct from the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act (section 258) and the Punjab Alienation Act (section 21), in order to protect the orders of the Collector from being upset in the Civil Courts.

248 *Section 27.*—This section demands no further remarks than that it is obviously desirable that a Settlement Officer should have the powers of a Collector under the Act.

249. *Sections 28-31.*—These sections deal with appeal and revision

250. *Rents* —Though a strong case can be made out from at least Birbhum for a change in the law regarding rents, it is possibly doubtful whether there is on the whole sufficient evidence, or whether any change would be expedient The suggestion is a practicable one for universal application. This question has given more trouble than any other portion of the report.

In place of such a change, I now recommend the use of that hitherto unused section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, which gives power to a Settlement Officer to settle and reduce rents, where it is necessary in the interests of public order and of the local welfare. This section is directly adapted to the condition of affairs in the Rampur Hât subdivision at present. Produce-rents as in Bankura can be dealt with under section 40 of the

* Possibly the question of usury is one which ought to be taken up more generally for the whole of the agricultural classes of Bengal I understand such a proposal has been made at a recent conference relating to Co-operative Credit Societies

Bengal Tenancy Act, though I must admit there is much more chance of a Sonthal paying a high produce-rent than an equivalent money-rent. But the Court can only fix in such cases a fair and equitable rent. It would probably be useless for the Sonthals to apply under section 40 at present until a record-of-rights has been prepared, because in the majority of these cases the landlords maintain that the Sonthals have only non-occupancy rights in the land or are only under-raiyats without a right of occupancy. The Sonthal would find it difficult to prove his case in Court.

251. *Peripatetic Staff.*—It has been suggested that, in order to ensure that the provisions of the proposed Act should be carried into effect, a peripatetic staff should be appointed to enquire into all cases of illegal transfers and to bring them to the notice of the Collector. It is undoubtedly a fact that without it a large, probably a very large, number of *sub rosa* transfers will be effected But it obviously must be composed of low-salaried officials, otherwise the cost of it will be very expensive. Such a staff will have plenty of opportunities for making illicit gains by concealing transfers for a consideration. It is doubtful whether it would get much supervision in the midst of the other multifarious duties of the Collector, unless he has the matter very much at heart. It would probably be a free lance. The staff would worry the *mahajan* in and out of head-quarters, and the *mahajan* would recompense himself somehow by taking it out of the unfortunate Sonthal. It would be bound to be unpopular both with the *mahajan* and the Sonthal. I must confess that I do not like this proposal of letting loose a new set of officials, unless there is some guarantee for their proper control, amongst the populace. Such a guarantee would, however, be found in a properly organized and controlled system for the maintenance of land records. There also would be no objection to a Collector sending out from time to time a sympathetic Deputy Collector to enquire into illegal transfers. I therefore recommend that no peripatetic staff should be appointed, but that, pending the establishment of a staff for the maintenance of land records, to whom the Collector's powers under the proposed Act should be entrusted, action should be taken from time to time by the Collector by deputing an experienced and sympathetic Deputy Collector to enquire into illegal transfers.

Page 39 252. The question of whether the High Court should have any jurisdiction in any except criminal cases demands consideration in connection with this Bill.

PROPOSED BILL.

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the Law of Landlord and Tenant and the Law of Usury amongst the aboriginal and semi-aboriginal tribes or castes within the territories under the administration of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, it is hereby enacted as follows —

Preliminary—

1 (1) This Act may be called the Bengal Aboriginal Tribes Act, 190

(2) It shall come into force on such date (hereinafter called the commencement of this Act) as the Local Government, with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, may, by notification in the local official gazette, appoint in this behalf

Punjab Alienation of Land Act, s. 4 (3) The Local Government shall, by notification in the local official gazette published with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, determine what bodies of persons in any local area, district or group of districts are to be deemed to be aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes or castes for the purposes of this Act

2. In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(1) A "complete usufructuary mortgage" means a transfer of the interest of a tenant in his tenancy,
for the purpose of securing the payment of money or grain advanced or to be advanced by way of loan,
upon the condition that the loan, with all interest thereon, shall be deemed to be extinguished by the profits arising from the tenancy during the period of the mortgage.

Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 5 (ii).

(2) A "village headman" means a person who engages with his landlord for the payment of the rents payable by the raiyats in a village or portion thereof, whether he is remunerated in any one or more combined of the following ways —

in kind, or money, or by some profit on the collection of rent, or by being permitted to cultivate certain lands free of or on a nominal rent, or to settle waste lands,

and includes Mostagirs, Mandals, Pradhans and ijaradars.

(3) A tenure-holder, or a village headman, or a raiyat, or an under-raiyat, means a tenure-holder, or a village headman, or a raiyat, or an under- raiyat, respectively, of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe or caste, unless the contrary is specifically stated

(4) All expressions which are defined by section 3 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, have the meanings assigned to them in the said section

Raiyats and under-raiyats.

3. No transfer of a raiyat or under-raiyat of his right in his holding or any portion thereof by mortgage, lease, sale, gift, or any contract or agreement shall be valid to any extent, except as provided by sections 4 and 5 Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s 46(1) Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s 70(3).

4 A raiyat may grant a lease of his right on his holding or any portion thereof to another person of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe or caste to enable him to cultivate the land *bonâ fide* as an under-raiyat Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s 46(1). Sonthal Perganas Regulation III of 1872 as amended in 1908, s 27(1)

5 A raiyat or under-raiyat may enter into a complete usufructuary mortgage of his right in his holding or any portion thereof for any period not exceeding seven years, provided that the term of such mortgage does not and cannot, in any possible event by any agreement, express or implied, exceed the period herein laid down

6 No transfer of a raiyat or under-raiyat, in his holding or any portion thereof, shall be binding on the landlord except in so far as it would be binding under the Bengal Tenancy Act Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s 46(4).

7 If a transfer is made by a raiyat or an under-raiyat in contravention of the provisions of section 3, the Collector may, on his own initiative, or on the application of any person who would be entitled to inherit the right in the holding of the raiyat or the under-raiyat in the event of his death without nearer heirs, or on the application of the landlord, eject the transferee from such holding or portion thereof, Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s 47 an 71 Sonthal Perganas Regulation III of 1872 as amended in 1908, s. 27(3).

and either restore it to the raiyat or the under-raiyat, or

to any heirs of the raiyat or the under-raiyat who transferred his right in it, or

provided the raiyat or under-raiyat, who transferred his right in the land, had a right of occupancy in it, put it in the possession of any other person resident or cultivating in the same village belonging to an aboriginal or semi aboriginal tribe or caste. Failing such persons the right of settlement shall accrue to the landlord, provided that he is not the original transferee *de facto* .

Provided—

(a) that the transferee whom it is proposed to eject has not been in continuous possession for twelve years;

(b) that he is given an opportunity of showing cause against the order of eviction; and

(c) that all proceedings of the Collector under this section shall be subject to revision by the Commissioner

8 At any time after the expiration of the period for which a raiyat or an under-raiyat has under section 5 transferred his right in his holding or any portion thereof, the Collector may, in his discretion, either on his own initiative, or the application of the raiyat or the under-raiyat or his heirs, or the landlord, put the raiyat or the under-raiyat or his heirs, into possession of such holding or portion thereof in the prescribed manner Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s 46(4).

Provided—

(a) that the transferee whom it is proposed to eject is given an opportunity of showing cause against the order of eviction ; and

(b) that all proceedings of the Collector under this section shall be subject to revision by the Commissioner.

Tenure-holders and village headmen.

9. The transfer of a tenure-holder of his right in his tenure or any portion thereof, or of a village headman in his right, as such, or any portion thereof, by mortgage, lease, sale, gift or any contract or agreement, shall not be valid to any extent, except as provided by sections 10 and 13. Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 240 Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, s. 65A(4).

10. A tenure-holder or village headman may grant a lease of one or other of the following kinds:—

(1) permanent leases of uncultivated land to another person or persons of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe or caste for the purpose of enabling the lessee or male members of their families to bring suitable portions of the land under cultivation, or

(2) leases of uncultivated land to such a person to enable him to cultivate the land as a raiyat.

Explanation.—The expression "uncultivated land" as used in this section, includes land, which, though formerly cultivated, is not, at the time the lease is granted, either under cultivation or in the occupation of the lessee for the purposes of cultivation.

11. A tenure-holder or a village headman may grant a lease, or enter into a complete usufructuary mortgage, of his right in all or any of the lands in his own cultivation to exactly the same extent, subject to the same conditions, liabilities and penalties as if it were the right of a raiyat in his holding or portion thereof.

Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 242.

12. If a transfer is made by a tenure-holder or a village headman in contravention of the provisions of section 9, the Collector may, on his own initiative, or on the application of any person who would be entitled to inherit the right in the tenure of the tenure-holder or the right in the village headship of the village headman in the event of his death without nearer heirs, or on the application of the landlord, eject the transferee from such tenure, village headship or portion thereof

and either restore it to the tenure-holder or the village headman or

to any heirs of the tenure-holder or of the village headman who transferred his right in it, or put it in the possession of any other person resident or cultivating in the same village belonging to an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe or caste. Failing such persons, the right of settlement shall accrue to the landlord, provided that he is not the original transferee *de facto*.

Provided—

(1) that the transferee whom it is proposed to eject has not been in continuous possession for twelve years,

(2) that he is given an opportunity of showing cause against the order of eviction and

(3) that all proceedings of the Collector under this section shall be subject to revision by the Commissioner.

Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, s. 67A(4).

13. (*1*) A tenure and a village headman's right, as such, if held by a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe or caste shall be heritable, and the tenure-holder or the village headman, whether holding under a written or verbal agreement, shall be entitled to a renewal of his lease on its expiry, on his agreeing to pay a fair and equitable rent for the tenure or village headship.

(2) The right of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal village headman, as such, shall be indivisible, save in so far as any arrangements to the contrary are in force at the time of the commencement of this Act, and shall devolve on one member only of his family according to custom and usage.

General provisions regarding alienation

Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s. 46(5). Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s. 70(5). Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 46(3). Punjab Alienation of Land Act, s. 17. Sonthal Parganas Regulation III of 1872, as ammended in 1908, s. 27(2).

14. No transfer of a lease in contravention of the provisions of sections 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, or 11 shall be registered, or shall in any way be recognised as valid by any court, whether in the exercise of civil, criminal or revenue jurisdiction.

Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 46(5). Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 240(6).

15. Nothing in the foregoing sections shall affect the validity of any transfer (not otherwise valid) of a raiyat or under-raiyat in his holding or any portion thereof, or of a tenure-holder in his tenure or any portion thereof, or of a village headman in his right as such, or in any portion thereof made *bonâ fide* before the

16. If a tenure-holder, village headman, raiyat or under-raiyat surrenders or abandons his tenure, village headships or holding under circumstances that amount to a virtual transfer of the tenure or holding on account of debts incurred by the tenure holder, village headman, raiyat or under-raiyat, the provisions of sections 7 and 12 shall apply.

Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 49. Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 241.

17. (*1*) Notwithstanding anything contained in sections 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, and 11 any tenure-holder, village headman or occupancy-raiyat may, without the consent of the landlord, transfer his tenure or holding or any part thereof for any reasonable and sufficient purpose, having relation to the good of the tenure or holding, or of the tenure or estate in which it is comprised, such as the use of the land for any charitable, religious or educational purpose, or for the purpose of mining manufacture or irrigation or as building ground for any such purpose, or for access to land used or required for any such purposes.

(*2*) Every such transfer must be made by registered deed, and before the deed is registered and the land transferred the written consent of the Collector must be obtained to the terms of the deed and to the transfer.

(*3*) Before consenting to such transfer, the Collector shall satisfy himself that the landlord is adequately compensated for the transfer, and, when only part of a tenure or holding is transferred, may, if he think fit, apportion between the transferee and the original tenant the rent payable for the holding.

Court sales.

18. No decree or order shall be passed by any court for the sale of the right of the tenure-holder, village-headman, raiyat or under-raiyat in his tenure or holding, or any portion thereof, nor shall any such right be sold in execution of any decree or order:

Provided as follows—

(a) any such right or holding may be sold in execution of a decree of a competent Court, to recover an arrear of rent which has accrued in respect of the right or holding,

(b) any such right or holding or portion thereof may be sold under the procedure provided by the Public Demands Recovery Act, 1895, for the recovery of a loan granted for the benefit of the land under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, or the Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884, or otherwise by the Local Government;

(c) any such right or holding or portion thereof may be sold in execution of a decree or order of a competent Court in satisfaction of a debt due under a mortgage which was registered before the commencement of this Act.

(d) The execution of all such decrees or orders referred to in sub-sections (a) (b) and (c) for the sale of such rights or holdings or portions thereof shall be transferred to the Collector under section 68 of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908

Punjab Alienation of Land Act, s. 16
Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s 46(2) and (3)
Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s. 70(2) and (3)
Central Provinces Tenancy Act, s 81
Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 17
Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s 240.

Explanation—Proviso (c) does not render valid any document which is otherwise illegal or invalid, or authorise a court to take judicial cognizance of any such document

Reclamation of land

19 (1) The oral or written consent of the landlord for the reclamation of land, which was previously jungle, waste or uncultivated, for the purposes of cultivation, shall be required in every case except —

Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, ss 64-67

(a) where the land was, before such reclamation, included in the tenancy of a cultivator,

(b) when, by the custom or usage of the village, tenure or estate, such consent is not necessary,

(c) where the land forms part of the lands of a tenure, held by a tenure-holder or of a village or portion thereof under a village headman as defined in this Act

(2) Such consent shall be deemed to have been given if, within two years from the date on which the cultivator commenced such reclamation, the landlord has not made an application to the Collector for the ejectment of the cultivator.

(3) Nothing in this section authorizes any cultivator to reclaim any orchard or cultivated or homestead land in the direct possession of any other person

20 When any application referred to in section 19, sub-section (2), is made, the Collector may, after making such enquiry as he thinks fit,—

(a) order the ejectment of the cultivator from the land so reclaimed, upon payment by the landlord of such reasonable compensation (if any) as the Collector may direct, or,

(b) direct that the cultivator may be left in undisturbed possession of the land

21. Every raiyat or under raiyat who cultivates or holds lands which he or any member of his family has reclaimed from jungle, waste or uncultivated land for the purposes of cultivation, shall have a right of occupancy in such land, notwithstanding that he has not cultivated or held the land for a period of twelve years

Usury

22 (1) All courts shall observe the rules contained in sub-section (2) in the following descriptions of suits —

Sonthal Parganas Regulation III (1872) s. 6
Dekhan Agriculturists Relief Act ss, 3, 12, 13, 15A, 15B, 15C, 15D, 16, 17, 20 and 71A.

(a) suits for recovery of money alleged to be due to the plaintiff when the defendant or one of the defendants is a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal caste or tribe

on account of money lent, or advanced to, or paid for, the defendant, or

as the price of goods sold, or

in an account stated between the plaintiff and the defendant, or

on a written or unwritten engagement for the payment of money not hereinbefore provided for,

(b) suits for recovery of money due on contracts other than the above and suits for moveable property or for the value of such property, or for damages, when the defendant or one of the defendants is a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal caste or tribe; and

(c) suits for foreclosure or for the possession of mortgaged property, or for sale of such property, or for foreclosure and sale, when the defendant or one of the defendants is a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal caste or tribe; and

(d) suits for the redemption of mortgaged property when the plaintiff, or where there are several plaintiffs, any one of the plaintiffs, is a member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal caste or tribe.

(2) (a) The court, if the amount of the creditor's claim is disputed, shall unless, for reasons to be recorded by it in writing, it deems it unnecessary to do so, examine both the plaintiff and the defendant as witnesses, and shall enquire into the history and merits of the case from the commencement of the transaction between the parties and the persons (if any) through whom they claim, out of which the suit has arisen, first with a view to ascertaining whether there is any defence on the ground of fraud, mistake, accident, undue influence or otherwise, and, secondly, with a view to taking an account between the parties in the manner provided below herein.

When the amount of the claim is admitted and the Court, for reasons to be recorded by it in writing, believes that such admission is true and is made by the debtor with a full knowledge of his legal rights as against the creditor, the Court shall not be bound so to enquire, but may do so if it thinks fit.

In other cases in which the amount of the claim is admitted the Court shall be bound to enquire as aforesaid.

(b) Interest on any debt or liability for a period exceeding one year shall not be decreed at a higher rate than two per cent. per mensem, notwithstanding any agreement to the contrary, and no compound interest, or any compound interest arising from any intermediate adjustment of account, shall be decreed.

(c) The total interest decreed on any loan or debt shall never exceed one-fourth of the principal sum, if the period be not more than one year, and shall not in any other case exceed the principal of the original debt or loan.

(d) All money paid by or on account of the debtor to the creditor or on his account, and all profits, service or other advantages of every description received by the creditor in the course of the transaction (estimated if necessary, at such money-value as the Court on its discretion, or with the aid of arbitrators appointed by it, may determine) shall be creditable first in the account of interest, and when any payment is more than sufficient to discharge the balance of interest due at the time it is made, the residue of such payment shall be credited to the debtor in the account of principal.

Explanation.—The expression "intermediate adjustment of account" in clause (b) of this sub-section means any adjustment of account which is not final and includes the renewal of an existing claim by bond, decree or otherwise, when, without the passing of fresh consideration the original claim is increased by such renewal.

Illustration.—A bond is given for Rs 75, of which Rs 25 are interest. Unless the creditor can prove to the satisfaction of the Court that he gave such consideration for the bond as rendered the transaction fair and equitable, of the Rs. 75, Rs 50 only will bear interest, and the limit of the claim on the bond will be Rs. 100, provided that the total Rs 50 has not been inequitably arrived at.

23. The Court may in its discretion in passing a decree under section 22, sub section (1), clause (a) or clause (b), or for the redemption of mortgaged property under the section, sub-section (1), clause (d), or instead of passing any decree for the foreclosure, possession or sale, or for the foreclosure and sale under section 31, sub-section (1), clause (c), for any mortgaged property, may pass a decree stating what amount is payable by the debtor, and may, if it thinks fit, direct that the amount shall be repayable in instalments of either money or grain on such dates, and without or with such interest as it thinks fit, and when the mortgagee is in possession, as to the appropriation of profits and accounting therefor, as it thinks fit. Such instalments, if of money, may be paid into Court.

24. Any person of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe may sue for an account of the amount of principal and interest remaining unpaid on a mortgage, or for an account of money lent or advanced to or paid for him by a creditor, or due by him to the creditor as the prices of goods sold, or on a written or unwritten engagement for the payment of money, and of money paid by him to the creditor,

and for a decree declaring the amount, if any, still payable by him to the creditor. The amount, if any, payable by the plaintiff shall be determined under the rules contained in section 22.

25. A decree passed under section 24 may, besides declaring the amount due, direct that such amount shall be paid by instalments of grain or money, with or without interest; and when any such decree so directs, and the amount is repayable in instalments of money, the plaintiff may pay the amount of such decree, or the amount of each instalment paid by such decree, as it falls due, into Court, in default whereof execution of the decree may be enforced by the defendant in the same manner as if he had obtained a decree in a suit to recover the debt.

General.

26. No suit shall be entertained in any Civil Court established under the Bengal, Agra and Assam Civil Courts Act, 1887, to vary, modify or set aside, either directly or indirectly, any order or decree of any Collector or Revenue Officer in any suit or proceeding under this Act, or shall have jurisdiction in any matter which a Collector is empowered to dispose of by this Act — Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 258. Punjab Alienation of Land Act, s. 21

27 (1) The local Government may vest any Deputy Collector by name or office with the powers of a Collector under this Act.

(2) In particular, during the conduct of any proceedings under Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act, the Chief Revenue Officer in charge of such proceedings shall have *ex-officio* the powers of a Collector under this Act

28. Appeals shall lie against the proceedings of any Deputy Collector exercising the powers of a Collector under this Act to the Collector of the district, whose orders thereon shall only be subject to revision by the Commissioner of the Division — Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 215.

Provided that—

(1) appeals from the proceedings of the Chief Revenue Officer in charge of proceedings under Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act may lie to the Commissioner, if the Local Government so direct, and that

(2) appeals from officers subordinate to such Chief Revenue Officer, shall lie to the Chief Revenue Officer.

29 Appeals shall lie against the proceedings of the District Collector in exercise of his original jurisdiction to the Commissioner of the Division

30. (1) In the performance of their duties and the exercise of their powers under this Act Collectors shall be subject to the general direction and control of the Commissioner and the Board of Revenue, and Deputy Collectors exercising functions of the Collector shall also be subject to the direction and control of the Collector. — Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, s. 270.

(2) Similarly Chief Revenue Officers and Revenue Officers shall be subject to the general direction and control of the Collector, Commissioner and the Board of Revenue and the Chief Revenue Officer, provided that if appeals lie from the Chief Revenue Officer to the Commissioner, the Chief Revenue Officer shall not be subject to the general direction and control of the Collector.

31 All applications for appeal or revision must be presented within thirty days of the date of the order or decision

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CHAPTER XV

SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS, AND TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.

(Terms of the Reference—No. XIV.)

253. *General proposals*—The last of the terms of the reference on which I have to report is whether any settlement proceedings should be undertaken in any area under report. I shall first treat this matter generally. I have been at some pains to try and point out that the chief oppressor is the *mahajan*. To this purpose I have thrown some proposals into the form of a draft Bill But this Bill will not do much to prevent the acquisition of lands by *mahajan*, if there are no records showing what lands the Sonthals now hold. The *mahajan* will endeavour to take the land away from him, and then state either that it was taken previous to the passing of this Act or that the Sonthal never had possession of it or had no rights in it, and that he obtained it from the landlord Also, if the Collector has in each case to go into a mass of evidence to discover if the Sonthal had occupancy rights or was in possession before or after the passing of the Act before he was dispossessed, then there is a possibility that he will not use his powers under the Act But if the Collector has a record-of-rights to work on, then he can without any difficulty pass orders on questions of dispossession. Without it nothing effective can be done. This, therefore, is the general argument that I advance in favour of an early settlement of the Sonthal area, viz., that if the proposals regarding legislation became law, a settlement will greatly enhance their effect, and for their proper working is a practical necessity

On this ground I therefore strongly advocate a change for the general programme laid out for a settlement of the whole of Bengal, viz., that Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore may be taken up as early as possible. The — Page 90 (Recommendation No 7.)

permanently-settled portion of Balasore could doubtless be taken up along with Midnapore.

Page 91. (Recommendation No 6.)

254. *Particular proposals.*—There is however an area where a record-of-rights is in my opinion immediately necessary, and that is in part of the Rampur Hât subdivision.

Pages 1, 69 70; Pages 41—44; Page 50; Cf., Dharmpur and Dihi Chitlapur, Appendix I(a), Nos. VIII and X; Cf., Saldoha and Langamati Appendix I(a), Nos IV and VI; Pages 16, 48; Pages 69 70

There are four main reasons why a settlement should be effected in this area The first is that the Sonthals have seen the results of a settlement in the Sonthal Parganas, and they desire a settlement in their own lands. The second is that rents have been increased arbitrarily, and the tenant pays on the whole considerably more than he did in 1881, and it is necessary to put a check on these illegal enhancements. Other reasons of the same class are in some villages the necessity for putting a stop to illegal exactions; in others for determining the exact status of the Sonthal, in a third group for determining the actual rent, and in all cases for classifying and finding out how much land the Sonthal really has. The third reason is of a different class, and that is that Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's compromise between landlords and tenants had the effect of preventing to some extent the breakage of the headman system, and a settlement may be expected to do the same A fourth and cogent reason is the necessity for showing some tangible results of the enquiries, and in a shape which is expected, viz., that of a settlement. In view of what has already been said in Chapter XIII, I consider that it would be politic to have an amin on the ground as soon as possible, if only for the traverse survey.

Vide list pa 91

The total area proposed for settlement is just over 100 square miles, and is made up as follows. —

Thana		Number of Mauzas	Number of Sonthal villages.
Murarai		12	35
Nalhati	...	15	44
Rampur		23	80
Maureswar		10	43

Pages 49 50; Page 69

The map and list of villages has been separately forwarded to the Director of Land Records I must admit that in the Revd L. O. Skrefsrud's villages there is not much necessity for a settlement, except as regards the gomastha cess, but this is the home of the trouble. I see therefore no advantage in leaving out these villages. In this connection Mr. Skrefsrud wrote a letter to Mr. Foster, Collector of Birbhum, dated 28th January 1908, in which it appears that he is strongly opposed to a settlement. This can only refer to his own villages, which in Birbhum are few in number So long as the enquiry was against *mahajans*, Mr. Skrefsrud was sympathetic, but when he saw it was concerned with landlords also, he became unsympathetic

Pages 13—16; Pages 41 42; Page 48

Most of the Sonthal villages in the area proposed for settlement were measured by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha in 1881—83, and in some 50 per cent. of these rents fixed. The measurements and rents are now out of date.

Page 1; ,, 16; Pages 43 44; Page 48; Page 39

I have included in this proposal certain villages in the Mollarpur Pargana, belonging to the Mohant of Mollarpur, and settled by Munshi Nundji in 1891—93. These include villages Jetia, Raipur and Polashponi, where the Mohant has been charging unduly high rates for increased cultivation, and the village of Rampur, where the record-of-rights of 1891-92 has been completely ignored. The area proposed for settlement is practically the "disaffected" area, if I may use the word.

255 As regards (1), the scattered villages in Mahamad Bazar outpost, and (2) the block of villages in the Rajnagar outpost, I am not aware that, in view of an impending general settlement, the urgency for an immediate settlement is so great. The date of their settlement is more a matter of administrative convenience. The Sonthals, however, in this area, on seeing a settlement in progress, may agitate for a settlement also; consequently it will not be advisable to postpone the settlement of this area too long. In the programme for Bengal, the general settlement of Birbhum is put down for the years 1913-14. I presume the special settlement proposed above could be

completed in 1911, so that, if the traverse survey party could appear in the cold weather of 1911-12 in Rajnagar, this would be sufficient. Should, however, the Director of Land Records consider that, from the point of view of completeness and convenience of administration, the settlement of these remaining villages should be undertaken separately from that of the general settlement, it might be taken up immediately after that of the area I have proposed. The local officers can easily supply the list of such villages and mauzas†. The total area would be less than 100 square miles, probably about 70 There is no urgency as regards the villages in thana Bolpur, etc

These proposals are being submitted through the Director of Land Records, who will, I hope, employ Maulvi Ekramuddin, my Kanungo, under an experienced Sonthal Settlement Officer like Mr. J. Robertson, Deputy Collector, in the special settlement, should it be sanctioned.

255 *Section 112, Bengal Tenancy Act*—In Chapter XIV a reference has been made to the necessity of legislating on the subject of rents. I have reluctantly given up certain proposals regarding these rents, and in their place have recommended a free use of section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, which empowers a Settlement Officer, when necessary in the interests of public order or of the local welfare, to settle all rents and to reduce them. The application of this section to a settlement of the Sonthal area in the Rampur Hât subdivision is desirable on three grounds:—(1) because the rents of Sonthals have been illegally enhanced out of proportion to the excess area under cultivation, (2) because rates of rents were fixed in 1881 and 1892 as being applicable to the Sonthals, but the rents are much higher in certain villages, and (3) because if a settlement is undertaken, excess area will be found under cultivation, rents will have to be assessed for this area, and the present discontent will be augmented.

I need say nothing more as regards grounds Nos. (1) and (2), the evidence regarding them is to be found in Chapter VII. What I wish to emphasize is the third ground, which makes section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act peculiarly applicable. In the Notes on Clauses in the Bill of 1906,* it was said —"Experience has shown, however, that certain landlords have been able to force illegal and oppressive rents on the tenantry without creating any immediate agrarian disturbance In such cases the Government proposes in future to take action to reduce the excessive rents before any actual disturbance arises." That is what has happened in Birbhum no immediate agrarian disturbance has been created, though rents have been illegally and excessively enhanced, but there is plenty of discontent. That gives a ground for action under section 112, Bengal Tenancy Act. But the point is that after the settlement, these rents will have to be still further enhanced on account of the excess area found under cultivation, and the probabilities are that the discontent will be further augmented Whether there is danger of trouble or not, the position is so full of possibilities for trouble that I think it is necessary in the interests of public order and of the local welfare that nothing should be done to further increase the present discontent, and to this end I recommend that the Settlement Officer in Rampur Hât should be given powers under section 112, Bengal Tenancy Act,—(1) to settle the rents of all Sonthals and other aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes, and (2) to reduce them, if in his opinion the maintenance of the existing rents would be unfair and inequitable. There would be little difficulty in settling the rents, because a table of rates has been twice prepared in Rampur Hât subdivision, and these would form a basis, with the necessary modifications, for the future rents. Such a measure in Rampur Hât should have a most salutary effect. It must be remembered that since 1872 the Sonthals in this area have been agitating off and on, and that any action taken has been in the nature of a compromise. It is now time that full powers should be exercised for putting matters on a firm basis. In settling this area, a considerable amount of trouble will have to be taken to explain that the lands lost by the Sonthals cannot be given back to them, but I am hopeful that the Sonthals will be reasonable in this respect.

Pages 69-70.

Page 1.

256. *Alternative Proposal.—Transfer of jurisdiction.*—As the report was in the Press, it was suggested to me by the Director of Land Records that

* *Vide* Rampini's Tenancy Act, page 363

† A rough list has been sent to the Director of Land Records

it would be advisable to draw the attention of Government to the case with which the Sonthal villages in Birbhum could be transferred to the Sonthal Parganas, and the whole Sonthal problem in Birbhum thus disposed of. This question forms no part of the reference, but there can be no doubt that that would be the end of the trouble in Birbhum, which, as already remarked, has been going on since 1872. It is the real solution. The portions transferred would consist of a block in the north-west of Murarai thana, another block in the west of Nalhati thana, adjoining strip of Rampur Hât thana on the west, widening out at the south and extending down to a block in the west of Pages 5, 7 Maureswar thana, a few villages on the border in Mohamad Bazar outpost, and finally a block in the north-west of Rajnagar outpost. This area does not exceed 170 square miles. The names of the villages that can be transferred from the subdivision of Rampur Hât are contained in the list of villages proposed from settlement on page 94. The names and positions of the other villages would have to the ascertained from the local officers. A rough list has been sent to the Director of Land Records.

The question of this transfer was once raised before in 1872, but it was pointed out* that the villages had not been transferred because—

(1) the Bengali element predominated in some of the parganas, and
(2) Suri was a more convenient administrative centre. †

Later the matter was rather summarily disposed of by saying that nothing could be done until a Census was made showing what population predominated.

In the present case, however, it is not proposed to transfer a pargana, but to transfer the Sonthal villages in the parganas adjoining the Sonthal Parganas. The question of Bengali predominance is not therefore of so much account, although there are a certain number of Bengali villages in the area. The area indicated above is, to the best of my belief, that in which the Sonthali element predominates, though doubtless towards the east the Bengali element predominates. If necessary, statistics of population could however be obtained from the village Census tables‡ by assuming that all Animists and Christians are Sonthals, and some of the Eastern villages eliminated. As regards the second difficulty, it must be admitted that Suri is a far more convenient centre of administration, though it is a curious position that on that account the Sonthals should have to submit to a different set of laws than their brethren in the Sonthal Parganas. It would seem that, in such a case, convenience of the centre of administration should give way entirely to the necessity of a different kind of administration.

A third difficulty is that the landlords and *mahajans* will strenuously Pages 41—44, „ 81, 89 object to such a transfer. But, if the proposed settlement and the proposed Bill are carried into effect, the result should be very nearly the same, except as regards rents, and even regarding them interference is very desirable.

Page 2 Mr. Maddox, in the letter originating this enquiry,§ gave it as his opinion that it was useless to consider the question then of a transfer without an unfair disregard of vested interests, although to a large extent these interests had in past years undoubtedly been secured either by fraud or by force *majeure*, or in return for consideration, in the majority of cases totally inadequate. I do not suppose however that Government, if it transferred this area, would interfere with vested interests of the past, but would only introduce the Sonthal Parganas system with effect from the date of the transfer. This meets this objection to some extent.

Pages 5, 6, 7. Historically and physically the area belongs to the Sonthals, and therefore to the Sonthal Parganas. The Sonthals cleared it originally. To any one travelling through the country, the boundary between the districts appears to have been laid in an extremely empirical manner by drawing straight lines to join up the eastern or south-eastern ends of the Sonthal Parganas Hills as they approached the boundary. If a space had been left in the Sonthal

* Government letter No. 1069, dated the 14th February 1872.
† Government letter No 2372, dated the 0th April 1872
‡ Tables showing distribution by religions are available in the Birbhum District Office, but not caste or nationality
§ Commissioner of Burdwan's letter No 237T. G. dated 20th August 1908

Parganas of five or six miles between the ends of the hills and the plains, there would have been none of this trouble. I am most strongly in favour of the proposed transfer, and I can only regret that, as the question was not included in the reference, that I have not full details of population and area to give Government.

The above facts are however possibly sufficient to give Government an idea as to whether the matter should be seriously considered. Meanwhile, the discussion on the question need not delay the proposed settlement, if it is decided that it should be undertaken.

A transfer of jurisdiction in Bankura would mean the transfer of nearly two-thirds or three-quarters of the Sadar subdivision to Chota Nagpur. in the Midnapore area, together with that of the Fatehabad pargana in Balasore, could appropriately form a new district by itself, and transferred to Chota Nagpur. The latter proposal to divide Midnapore into two districts, which was originally brought forward on other grounds, has I understand, been already negatived. If however it is ever revived, plenty of evidence for its necessity can be found in this report.

257. *A final recommendation*—It is obvious that, if possible, one Sonthal knowing Deputy Collector should be posted to each of the districts of Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore It is however more necessary that Sonthal-knowing Munsifs should be appointed at Rampur Hât (Birbhum), Khatra (Bankura) and Midnapore Sadar. It would be desirable to have a Sonthal-knowing Munsif also in Suri Sadar (Birbhum), Bankura Sadar and Garbeta and Danton (Midnapore), but this is probably an impossibility. Page 92 (Recommendation No 14)

Collectors and District Judges in these districts should therefore encourage the Deputy Collectors and Munsifs subordinate to them to pass the special language examination in Sonthali, and to obtain the prescribed reward of Rs. 1,000. For the Munsif at Khatra it should be, on account of the large Sonthal population in Raipur, Simlapal and Khatra, almost a *sine qua non* that he should pass the examination. It would not perhaps be necessary to lay down any strict rule on the subject, but merely to rule that this officer was expected to pass the examination under penalty of a transfer. I gather that it would be a penalty. Pages 3, 8 & 9.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUMMARY.

It remains to bring together the recommendations contained in the report These are not many and are definitely stated in certain portions of the report. They are—

1 The introduction of an Act to prevent the alienation of land and to amend the Law of Usury amongst aborigines and semi-aborigines on the lines of the draft on pages 82 to 87, and discussed in Chapter XIV.

2. The immediate extension of this Act to the tribes and areas given on page 72, also on page 68.

3. The subsequent extension of this Act to other tribes and other areas on enquiry from the local officers, *vide* page 72, also page 68

4 In the progress of any settlement operations an enquiry into the question whether there are other tribes to whom it should be extended. *vide* page 72, also page 68.

5. That the attention of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam may be drawn to the matter, with a view to protecting the Sonthals in the Barind, *vide* page 72.

6. The immediate settlement of an area of about 100 square miles of Sonthal villages in Rampur Hât subdivision, Birbhum, and the application of section 112, Bengal Tenancy Act, to this area, and should the Director of Land Records think fit of the remaining villages in Mohamed Bazaar and Rajnaggar, *vide* pages 88 and 89.

7. With a view to making the proposed legislation effective, a change in the 24 years' settlement programme of Bengal so as to have Birbhum

Bankura, Midnapore and the remaining portion of Balasore settled as early as possible, *vide* page 88.

8. Suggestions regarding education, *vide* page 58.

9. Suggestions regarding Agricultural Banks, *vide* page 61.

10. Suggestion regarding dates of realisations of agricultural loans, *vide* page 61.

11. Suggestion that the attention of Sub-Registrars should be drawn to the necessity of explaining to aborigines thoroughly the documents the latter execute, *vide* page 36.

12. Consideration of question whether appeals in cases against and brought by Sonthals, except in criminal cases, should go before the High Court, *vide* pages 39 and 82.

13. Recommendation of stoppage of barter for rice-beer in Birbhum, *vide* page 58. There are no other recommandations regarding the liquor traffic for the reason given on page 60.

14. Certain recommendations as regards Munsiffs, etc , and their language, *vide* page 91.

GLOSSARY

A

Abwab—Illegal cess.

Adhi—Term applied to a produce-rent according to which the tenant pays the landlord half the crop.

Aimadar—A tenure (thana Garhbeta), *vide* page 20.

Amla—A landlord's servant, whose duty it is to look after accounts, etc, of the property.

B

Band—A kind of tank

Banya—Trader.

Barsali—A rate of interest, *vide* page 26.

Benami—Granted to a person other than the rent grantee.

Bethbegari—Free labour given by a tenant to his landlord

Bhagti—Term applied to a produce rent; the tenant divides the crop with the landlord in a fixed proportion.

C

Chitha—A statement used in the report of rents and arrears

Chotha—A rate of interest, *vide* page 26.

D

Derhia— 50 per cent. interest.

Desh-Manjhi—Perganait s assistant

Dhan—Paddy.

Dhangar—Usually used to mean uplands.

Dhurta—A rate of interest, *vide* page 26.

Dikku—A foreigner in from the Sonthal's point of view, *e.g.*, a Bengali

Dubra—100 per cent. interest.

G

Ghat—Used in the report to mean a jungle pass.

Ghatwal—Guardian of a jungle pass.

Gola—A grain store.

Gomashta—Landlord's rent-collector.

Gorait—Village messenger.

Guru—A village school-master.

I

Ijaradar—A farmer of rents; in Salbani a village headman, *vide* page 21; also in Balasore, *vide* page 23.

Ijara—The interest of an ijaradar.

J

Jamai or Jote—A tenancy, *vide* pages 18-19.

Jangalburi—A tenure, *vide* page 18.

Jalkar—Generally a fishery; used by Mr. Skrefsrud to denote the right to use water.

Jama—Rent.

Jamabandi—Landlord's list of rents.

Jog-Manjhi—Sonthal village master of ceremonies and moral censor.

Jog-Paranick or Jog-Paramanick—Jog-Manjhi's deputy.

K

Kabuliyat—Written arrangement to accept a lease.
Kazi—Perganait's assistant in Balasore.
Khatian—Paper prepared showing rent, area, rights, etc., of a tenant in his holding
Khas —(Possession), personal possession without intervention of an intermediary.
Khem—Term applied to rent-free land of Sonthal village officials.
Kistibandi—An arrangement for repayment of a debt in instalments
Kist—Time of repayment
Korali—A rate of interest, *vide* page 26.
Kotal—Village messenger
Krishani—A system of cultivating labour; the labourer is given a certain amount of land to cultivate, and he is remunerated by a share of the crop, a common form is that in which the owner provides the seed and the labourer obtains a one-third share of the crop.
Krishan—A labourer
Kudam naiki—Naik's assistant.
Kudum Laiya—Laiya's assistant.
Kurfa raiyat—Under-raiyat.

L

Laiya—Village priest

M

Mahajan—Money-lender
Mandal—Village headman
Mangan—Subscription from raiyats to defray any expenses of a landlord
Mân—Term applied to the rent free lands of Sonthal village officials
Manjhi—Sonthal village headman, also general surname of a Sonthal.
Mokurrari—Permanent lease at a fixed rate
Mokurridar—The holder of a mokurrari lease.
Mostagir—Village headman, also farmer of rents.

N

Naiki—Sonthal village priest.
Narmal—Term used meaning the lower plains of Bengal

P

Panchak—Nominal or quit-rent
Paranick or Paramanick—Manjhi's assistant
Parja—Raiyat
Patni—A peculiar tenure, whose holders are liable to be a sold up in a manner similar to holders of estates.
Patta—Written lease
Pathsala—Village school
Perganait—Head of a group of Manjhis or Sonthal headman of different villages, usually the leader of the Sonthals to a particular locality.
Pradhan—Village headman.

S

Sajhai—Term applied to a produce-rent; the amount ofthe produce is fixed by weight or volume.
Salami—A premium for a lease
Sal—A valuable jungle tree (Shorea robusta).
Satasi—37½ per cent interest.
Sicci—25 per cent. interest.

T

Tola—Separate group of houses in a village, a hamlet.

Z

Zemindar—A landlord holding under Government.

MEASURES

1 bis	...	...	...	20 aris.
1 ari	...	...	...	about 10 seers.
1 map	..	...	...	8 sulis.
1 suli	...	...	...	20 pie.
2 pie		...	...	1 seer (kutcha)
2½ seers (kutcha)		...	...	1 seer (pucca).
1 ara	...	...	...	16 kuris.
1 kuri	...	...	...	4 mans.
1 man	...	...	...	4 pais.
1 pai	...	...	...	4 konas.
1 kuri	...	...	...	8 seers (approximately).

List of Villages proposed for settlement in Rampur Hât Subdivision.

Name of Thana	Name of Mauza.	Revenue survey No	Area in acres.
	Baraha Gopalpur	19	2,958
	Santoshpur	20	730
	Rajoogram	68	1,620
	Mukundapur	75	290
	Chandrapara	76	515
	Nakorgram	74	295
Murarui ...	Birnagar	70	1,020
	Harindoba	71	700
	Chandarpur	72	304
	Mathurapur	73	1,540
	Kamdebnama	120	1,970
	Jhikorhati	122	430
	Barsur	2	655
	Sultanpur	1	1,004
	Pushur	7	840
	Gobindapur	8	714
	Bhola	9	671
	Madua	13	677
	Haritoka	15	955
	Kadasir	14	591
Nalhati ...	Babutai	34	1,129
	Sadofa	10	901
	Madhabpur		
	Bhabanondapur	1	1,874
	Lakshminarayanpur	3	1,610
	Haridaspur	6	1,136
	Kartikdanga	5	268
	Santoshpur	4	985
	Bodhra	7	1,597
	Chhora	15	1,097
	Chakaipur	1	1,218
	Belia Mitrunjeypur	11	1,811
	Narayanpur	12	1,325
	Ekpara	13	1,955
	Khedamara	14	1,182
	Bhatina	21	2,266
	Kalkapur	26	295
	Radipur	22	2,444
	Prahladpur	12	218
Rampur Hât ...	Kashtagarh	11	1,175
	Tahaldara	3	375
	Rampur	9	464
	Jathla	10	964
	Hatikanda	13	608
	Ghosura or Masura	18	2,271
	Nibarsia	22	1,046
	Bamnigaon	29	649
	Goria	20	904
	Sanabandhi	41	670
	Khojapur	16	151
	Tarachua	28	6,861
	Hatgachia	38	3,767
	Manbolia	27	1,485
	Ghagha	14	1,246
	Jetia	22	2,246
	Raipurchak	21	1,335
Mauresswar ...	Birajpur	13	340
	Goala	10	1,085
	Pachami	23	469
	Chanda	41	1,126
	Kalaipahari	17	713
	Total ...		71,743

PART II.

CONTENTS.

* Where no name is given, enquiries were made personally.

APPENDIX I (a).

(*Vide* Chapter IV.)

BIRBHUM.

Rampur Hât Subdivision.

MURARAI THANA.

*1.—Jitpur: Broken** (*12 Sonthal houses*).—This village was measured, and a settlement effected by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, Deputy Collector (1879—1882), between the zamindars, Kadir Hossain Khan and the Mostagir or headman of the village, at Rs. 43-8-3 for 207 bighas, 8 cottahs, 4½ dhurs. The major portion of the land consisted of 4th class rice-land assessed at 4 annas a bigha. Subsequently the Mostagir sold his right on account of a loan to one Dhona Ram Manjhi; the latter only took the rents, and not the Mostagir's land But when Dhona Ram Manjhi sold his right to another *mahajan*, Ramdhari Singh, the latter endeavoured to get possession of that land; and in the end, owing to an Honorary Magistrate dismissing a case brought against him by the Mostagir of crop-cutting on the ground that it was a civil dispute, got possession of that very land regarding which he had incidentally been previously punished by another Magistrate for cattle-trespass or cattle-rescue. As a matter of fact, the land was actually sold, according to the sale deed. Ramdhari Singh now collects the rents in place of the Mostagir. For old land the rent is unchanged. For new land, however, the average rent he charges works out at annas 8 a bigha, whereas the old rates work out on the average at just under 4 annas a bigha. Beyond the loss of the *mahajan's* land, there have been few transfers to Dikkus, except by usufructuary mortgages The villagers, however, complain that they have lost some of their lands, owing to a boundary dispute with the neighbouring village of Gopalpur The most noticeable feature of this village is the rent charged for the new land, as compared with the old rents—

Name of Raiyat.	Original land.	Original rent.	Land lost.	New (re-claimed) land.	Rent for re-claimed land.	Remarks.
	B. C. D.	Rs. A. G.	B. C.	B. C. D.	Rs. A. G.	
Dadu Manjhi ...	53 8 2¼	12 2 3	All	......	......	Private sale for debts
Ganga " ...	40 1 5	8 14 14	7 0	9 7 5	4 12 0	Boundary dispute. Has mortgaged his land for Rs. 200.
Ratu " ...	23 6 7½	4 11 15	4 0	3 16 0	1 13 5	
	......	......	10 0	...	......	Usufructuary mortgage, 6 years, Rs. 77.
	......	......	4 10	......	......	Usufructuary mortgage, 6 years, Rs 42 (1907).
Bajun " ...	21 13 15	4 3 5	4 0	2 4 6	1 2 0	Usufructuary mortgage, 12 years, Rs. 55 (1907)
Phagu " ...	......	....	5 0	2 4 11	1 2 0	Usufructuary mortgage, 7 years, Rs. 15 (1907)
Gopla " ...	6 16 5	1 6 10	...	5 7 5¾	2 10 5	
Chota Phagu Manjhi	......	......	4 0	8 12 10	4 0 0	Usufructuary mortgage, 7 years, Rs. 40 (1903)
	.. ..	..	1 0	..	...	Internal dispute
Bhagrit Manjhi ..	1 19 7½	0 7 19	All	.....	...	Probably boundary dispute.
Poran " † ...	0 4 0	0 8 0	All	.. .	...	
Dula " † ...	0 4 0	2 0 0	All	.. .	...	
Bhagina " ...	20 8 14½	3 15 15	All	......	...	

* "Broken" signifies a village in which the rents are not paid through a Sonthal or aboriginal headman, "Intact" where they are

† Paikasht under-raiyats introduced by the Mostagir after the settlement, but dispossessed by the mahajan mostagir subsequently.

Where the raiyats have not lost all their land, they still pay the original rent for the land still in their possession, together with the rent assessed on new land.

All these figures have been ascertained from the original measurement papers of Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, and the *jamabandis* of the Dikku *mostagir*.

There are some Kodas in the village who cultivate a little land. The land of two Sonthals has been unaccounted for.

	B.	C.	D.
2nd class paddy land	1	13	2
3rd ditto	9	6	17½
4th ditto	116	9	2
2nd class upland	78	17	12¼
Homestead land	1	1	11
Total ...	207	8	4¾

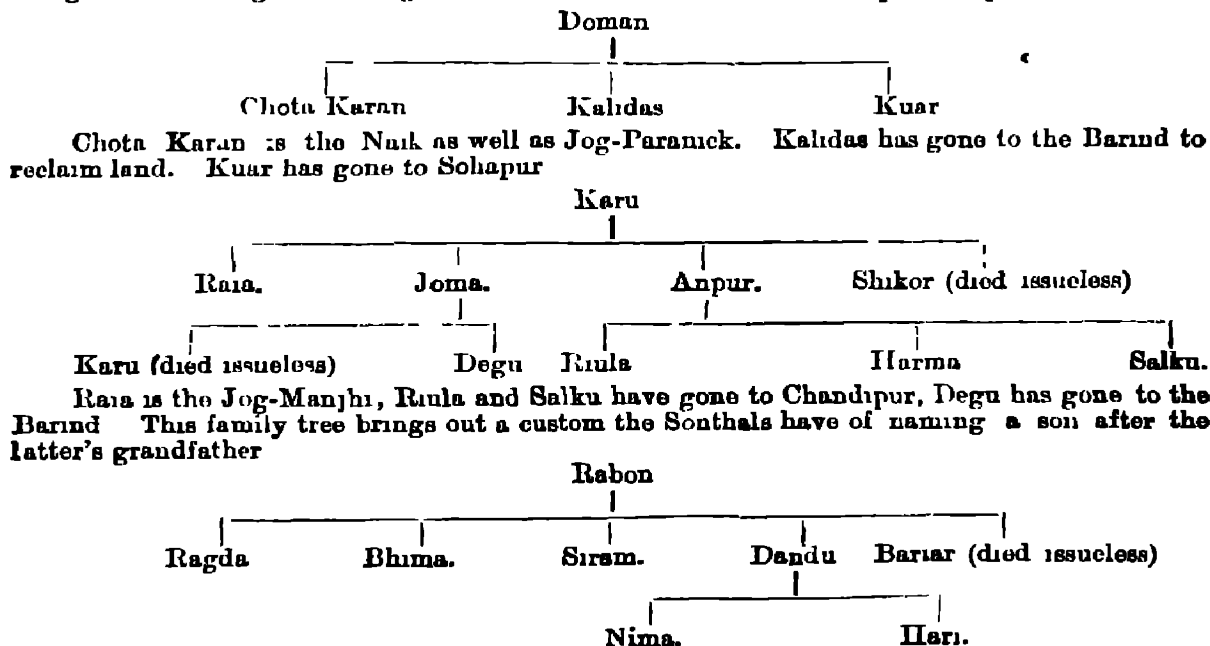
II—Jagarnathpur Intact (*17 Sonthal houses*)—This village was measured and a settlement effected between the zamindar, Tures Chandra Pande (*dar-patnidar*) and the Mostagir, by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, at a rental of Rs 76-4-9 for 278-11-9¼ bighas * Though the settlement was only for seven years, and was made in 1879—82, this rent still holds good, and the Sonthals still pay through the Manjhi, though fresh land has admittedly been reclaimed No statements of debts or of mutations of land are given, as the villagers are generally free from debts, and only one temporary mutation has been recorded. This village is an example of the good effect of a liberal zamindar and a settlement.

	B	C.	D
2nd class paddy	5	9	1
3rd ditto	75	6	8½
4th ditto	150	1	13¼
1st class upland	6	4	0
2nd ditto	28	7	17½
Homestead	3	3	11
Total	278	11	9¼

III—Karangdih alias *Bahoragachhia Broken* (*12 Sonthal houses*).—At the time of Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement, the rent was Rs 168-14-10, varying very little from what it might have been according to his rates It was not settled but subsequently the Mostagir was sold up for rent by the zamindar, and two *mahajans* got possession They have admittedly now got most of the land of the village in their possession by *mahajani*, but not without trouble Most of the Sonthals had executed deeds of sale of their lands; but they did not give possession, on the ground that they had been told the deeds were mortgages The *mahajans* won, or rather compromised, a test case, and then got possession of all the other lands in dispute The Sonthals are now servants of the *mahajans*, and some cultivate *adhi*. At first they claimed that they had been arbitrarily evicted

NALHATI THANA

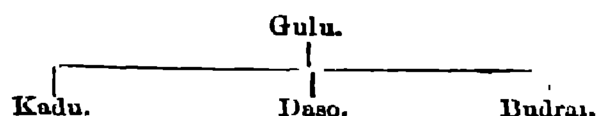
IV Rangamati Broken—The Kodas were the original people in the village; the Sonthals came afterwards and cleared a separate *tola* At the time of Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement, the Sonthal *tola* was measured, and the settlement effected with a Koda Manjhi at Rs 19-7-12 for 108 bighas 1 cottah 12¼ dhurs The Sonthal *tola* has recently been sold up for rent, the auction-purchaser being a *mahajan* As he wants to increase the rent, the Sonthals have been paying into the Civil Court the original rent fixed by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, though they admit to having reclaimed land. No transfer of any note has taken place in this village, only the land of one Sonthal, Rabon, is said to have been settled with another raiyat by the zamindar and some land has been abandoned. The village is interesting as showing how the Sonthals move about from place to place—



Chota Karan is the Naik as well as Jog-Paranick. Kalidas has gone to the Barind to reclaim land. Kuar has gone to Sohapur

Raia is the Jog-Manjhi, Riula and Salku have gone to Chandipur, Degu has gone to the Barind This family tree brings out a custom the Sonthals have of naming a son after the latter's grandfather

Rabon is the raiyat who lost his land. On his death, Bhima went and lived with his father-in-law in Murgadanga Siram has gone to live with his father-in-law in Kalipur, his father-in-law had no son, and, according to custom, he has gone to live with his father-in-law. When Dandu died, his wife returned to Mohulbani with her children Nima and Hari. Ragda is the Kudam-naiki.



Kadu came from Simuljaria; Daso and Budrai are there still.

The unchanged rent-roll of Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's time is given below —

Raiyat	Amount of land			Rent			Remarks.
	B.	C.	D.	Rs	A.	GS	
Kadru Manjhi	19	2	12	3	3	12	
	9	0	17⅛	1	10	18	
Ringohu „ son of Kadru.	14	2	9¼	2	13	11	
Lachu „ „ Baria	7	2	17	1	1	2	
Doman „ „ Karan	16	6	8½	2	14	12	
Kadu „ ...	10	13	2¼	2	2	7	
Matru „ son of Raia	11	13	6½	2	3	3	
Rama „	1	0	0	0	14	0	
Raban „	0	13	2	0	1	3	Lost his land (2nd class *bhita*).
Gupi „	1	14	9	0	3	13	Abandoned his land (2nd class *bhita*)
Barjo „	10	4	1	1	13	6	Abandoned
Jumai „	3	12	15	0	13	10	Cultivated by Doman's son
Raju „	2	10	2	0	6	15	Unknown if he still cultivates

The following list gives the debts of the Sonthals due to *mahajans* before the cutting of the crop These are ordinary debts, which should ordinarily be cleared off, or nearly so every year —

Name.	Debts	Rate of Interest
Ragda Manjhi ...	Rs 7	Annas 4 per rupee (sicci)
	„ 4	Ditto (different *mahajans*)
Ringohu „ .	„ 20	Ditto
	4 bis* grain	Derhia (50 per cent)
Kuar „	4 „	Do
	2 „	Do (different *mahajans*)
Kadru „	Rs 10	Sicci
	3 bis	Derhia
Kadu „ ..	4 „ (1907)	Do.
	4 „ „	Do (different *mahajans*)
Matru „ .	4 „	Do.

* One bis = 20 aris 1 ari = 10 seers (approximately)

One of the Kodas is more indebted than any of the Sonthals

V.—Murgadanga Intact (17 houses).—This village was measured by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, and a settlement effected between the Mostagir and the zamindar Kudrat-ullah Khan for 198 bighas 1 cottah 18 dhurs at Rs 40-3-16 An area of 20 bighas 1 cottah has been reclaimed and assessed at a rental of Rs 16 A further area of 10 bighas 9 cottahs 11¼ dhurs has been measured and assessed at Rs 5-6-1 The rent is still paid through the Mostagir Thus about 30 bighas have been assessed at about Rs. 21, which from the details of the original land of the village* (margin) shows that either the new rates are much higher than the old rates, or else a wrong classification of land has been made Only one permanent transfer of 6 bighas has been made by a Sonthal, Bishun Manjhi, to a *mahajan*. This was in 1902

	B.	C.	D.		Per bigha. Rs	A
* 3rd class rice land	0	10	17	at	0	6
4th „ „	124	4	12	„	0	4
Upland „ „	71	14	13	„	0	2
Homestead	1	10	16			

The statement of debts is as follows :-

Debtor.	Debt.	Interest.	Security.	Remarks.
Arjun Manjhi	Rs 120 (1906)	......	6 bighas simple mortgage to Banku Das.	Amount to be paid by yearly instalments of Rs. 18. Two instalments repaid.
	,, 20 (1907)	6 annas per rupee.	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*, all repaid, except 7 aris.
	,, 7 (1908)	4 annas per rupee.	......	
	3 bis 8 aris .. (1908).	Derhia ..	. ...	
Karan ,, ...	Rs 30 (1908)	4 annas per rupee.	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*.
Bishun ,, ...	,, 40 (1902)	......	3 bighas usufructuary mortgage to Banku Das.	For principal and interest, 16 years.
	1½ bis (1902)	Derhia ..	.. ..	
	17 aris (1908)	Do. ...	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*.
	Rs. 5 (1908)	4 annas per rupee.	......	
Lakhan ,,	,, 8 and 2 bis grain.	......	2 bighas usufructuary mortgage to Banku Das.	For principal and interest, 20 years.
	,, 4 ...	4 annas per rupee.	... ..	Banku Das.
	1 bis (1907) ...	Derhia . .	......	
	1 ,, (1908) ...			
	5 ,, (1908) ...			
Naran ,, .	3 ,, (1907) ..	...	Usufructuary mortgage till 3 bis is paid.	Cultivated "adhi" by Sonthal.
	1 ,, (1907) ...	Derhia ...	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*
	1 ,, (1908) .			
	Rs 2-10 (1907)	4 annas per rupee.	......	
	,, 3 (1908) ...			
Chuna ,, ...	2 bis (1908)	Derhia ...	......	
Ram ,, ...	2 ,, ,,	Do. ..	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*.
	Rs. 11 ,,	Sicci ...	.. ..	
Dibu ,, ...	15 aris ,,	Derhia ...	......	Banku Das, *mahajan*, re-paid all, expect interest of 7½ aris.
Mankar ,, ...	2 bis ,,	Do. ...	......	Repaid interest.
Chota Arjun Manjhi.	1½ ,, ,,	Do. .	......	Banku Das.
	2½ ,, (remaining due in 1908)	Do. ...	......	
	Rs. 3 (1907).	6 annas a rupee.	... ..	
	,, 2 (1908)...	Sicci .	.. ...	

In this village Banku Das, *mahajan*, follows the Sonthal Parganas system of interest; if he gives money in *Magh*, *Phagun*, *Chait* and *Bysakh*, the rate is 6 annas a rupee for the first year, when he gives it in *Asarh*, *Savan*, *Bhadro* or *Asin*, the rate is the ordinary rate of 4 annas a rupee, in the other three months the Sonthals do not borrow.

VI—Village Saldoha - Broken—This village was measured by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, but the settlement of the village with the Mostagir was not accepted by the zamindar. The rental of the village at that time was Rs. 237-9, and the area 453 bighas 5 cottahs 6¼ dhurs,* at the Deputy's rates it should have been Rs. 111-9-2. A fresh settlement appears to have been made by the zamindar himself with each raiyat, just after a measurement in 1292B., or 1885 But it is impossible to reconcile his rents and areas with those of Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha. Suffice it that in 1892 the average rent per bigha appears to have been 10 annas per bigha for Sonthals, a rate which has been maintained till the present day more or less.

	B.	C.	D.		B.	C.	D.
* 1st class rice land	0	8	15	1st class upland	5	9	4
2nd ditto	2	8	18	2nd ditto	96	15	19½
3rd ditto	47	17	5	Homestead	3	7	10
4th ditto	299	16	14½				

As regards mutation of land, of 376 bighas which the Sonthals (mentioned below) possessed in 1292, 21 have been sold for debts, 25 have been sold up in execution of Civil Court decrees for debts, 42 have been sold up in execution of Civil Court decrees for rent, and 42 have been mortgaged.

In this village the mortgages appear to be likely to be permanent, and it may be said that in about 25 years over one-third of the original cultivation has gone into the hands of Dikkus.

The same Sonthals, according to their own account, have reclaimed some thirty odd bighas during the same period

A statement showing changes in rent and area, and the amount of land lost, is given below

It will be noticed that a fictitious high rent is first fixed and then another fictitious reduction is made The remainder is collected.

The results of the measurement last year have not been incorporated.

Raiyat	Original land.	Original rent.	Present amount of land.	Present rent	Land lost	Remarks.
	B c d (1292)	Rs a g (1292)	B c	Rs a g	B c.	
Budinath Manjhi	47 6 0	31 4 0	81 10 −25 0	51 4 0	25 0	By Civil Court sales for debts, cultivated by zamindar
Mankar "	48 10 0	87 3 11 −53 3 11 34 0 0	64 10 −8 0 (temporarily) ,	117 3 11 −73 3 11 44 0 0	8 0	Usufructuary mortgage for interest only
Phudhan "	30 18 0 (1306) 32 16 0	73 0 5 −56 11 5 17 5 0 (1306) 74 10 10 −54 5 10 20 5 0	.	..	5 0 All	Sale for debts Sold up for rent by zamindar.
Bhado Manjhi (deceased)	(1292) 1 11 0	(1292) 1 0 0	.	..	" ..	Said to have been sold up for rent
Durga Manjhi, son of Budhan	13 5 0	12 8 15 −6 13 11 5 11 4	13 15	12 8 15 −5 5 5 7 3 10		
Barjol Manjhi, son of Suna.	14 19 0	33 5 3 −22 5 3 11 0 0	(1313) 16 12	(1313) 45 5 3 −33 5 3 12 0 0	...	
Dandu Manjhi	6 17 0	20 4 8 −15 4 8 5 0 0	2 16	1 12 0	4 1	Surrendered to zamindar.
Pirtu "	36 1 0	79 9 18 —50 16 17 28 9 1	36 16	81 2 17 −51 16 17 29 3 0 (1315)	16 0	Sold or mortgaged for Rs 100, original loan borrowed to pay rent.
Lakhan " ...	(1297—1306) 9 7 0	20 1 0 —14 1 0 6 0 0	.	......	All	Sold up for rent, cultivated by zamindar
Singrai " ...	(1295) 17 1 0	(1295) 31 3 9 −19 3 9 12 0 0	17 1 12 0 (temporarily)	12 0 0	12 0	Mortgaged temporarily to a *mahajan*, cultivated *bhagti* by Sonthals.
Sikhor "	(1292) 28 11 0	68 9 1 −49 8 1 19 1 0	28 11 —5 15 (temporarily).	19 1 0	2 0 0 15 3 0	Usufructuary mortgage 1903, for 9 years for interest.

Raiyat	Original land	Original rent.	Present amount of land	Present rent.	Land lost.	Remarks
	B C D.	Rs A O	B C	Rs. A O	B C	
Anu Manjhi	41 18 0	26 15 17	41 18 / −16 0	26 15 17	16 0	Sold for debts
Bathol ,,	34 0 0	70 8 1 / −49 12 9	40 11	73 8 1 / −49 12 9	..	
		20 7 12		23 11 12 (1294)		
Bhim ,,	21 7 0	5 10 5	21 7	5 10 5	..	
Anu ,,	4 0 0			...		Son of Budinath Manjhi dispossessed for non-payment of rent assessed for reclaimed land Dikhu cultivates it

N B — It is possible Singhrai's and Pirti's mortgages have resolved* themselves to out-and-out transfers by sale or Civil Court decree

RAMPUR HAT THANA.

VII — Village Digalpahari Broken — A *patta* exists, dated 1873, for Rs 76 for the village of 112 bighas Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha subsequently measured the village, found its area was 466 bighas 3 cottahs 12¾ dhurs, and a settlement was effected at Rs 131-13-10 between the zamindar Khetra Nath Chaudhury and the Mostagir of the village The increase in rent was, however, too much for the Mostagir, who was subsequently sold up for rent On that the zamindar took *khas* possession, and began to give *pattas* at increased rents for seven years to settled raiyats. On their expiry, fresh *pattas* were granted, the last being granted in 1900

The figures ascertained for the receipts of the raiyats examined show that they cultivated about 264 bighas on a rental of Rs 88, just after Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement, and that the same raiyats now cultivate 225 odd bighas on a rental of Rs 102-8 It thus appears that whereas the average rent for the raiyat, in Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's time was 5½ annas a bigha, it is now 7¼ annas per bigha

Besides three raiyats have left the village, because they could not pay the increased rent (there was no sale), Bhairo Manjhi's brother sold 6 bighas of his land five years ago to a *mahajan*, Bhagru Manjhi sold 3 bighas two years ago, Malla Manjhi sold 5 bighas 6 cottahs, and the Mostagir has lost his land 67 bighas 16 cottahs 15½ dhurs One Raju Kamar also lost his *jote*, because he could not pay the rent demanded for it The statement for debts does not indicate that they owed more than the usual amount of debts due to the *mahajans* before the harvest

VIII.— Village Dibdullapur . Broken — This village was not settled or measured by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha

Villagers' version

Up to 10 or 12 years ago, they paid rent through a Mostagir of the village The villagers brought a case against the zamindars (Mulhati Babus, who are, if not all, some of them, also *mahajans*). There was an inquiry. The case was compromised. The zamindar then told the Sonthals that, as they had brought a case, they would not stay in the village All the Sonthals were then dispossessed, but now cultivate *adhi*

Zamindar's version

Several people died in this village, and because of a superstition that there was a ghoul in the village, other Sonthals sold all their lands

Local version

The zamindars, who are *mahajans*, have dispossessed the Sonthals on account of debts the Sonthals had incurred This is the main reason, though possibly the *mahajans* were specially oppressive on account of the case I doubt the ghoul theory, though not an uncommon reason for flight This can only refer to a few. There are now 11 houses of Sonthals in this village, daily labourers, and *adhi* cultivators

The circumstances of this village can best be illustrated by a statement of the sale deeds (taken from the sale deeds executed in favour of the *mahajans*) —

Land.	Sale price	Land.	Sale price
B C D	Rs	B C. D.	Rs.
15 0 0	99	20 11 0	96
12 0 0	57	13 0 0	88
3 15 0	12	26 10 0	199
4 0 0	16	16 15 0	160
3 15 0	12	18 4 10	99
10 15 0	24	3 18 0	69
6 14 0	19	8 0 0	31
3 10 0	49		
5 0 0	49	210 9 10	1,397
24 10 0	149		
29 0 0	199		

The village was originally held at a rental of Rs 40 by a Sonthal and a Dhangar, who executed a *kabuliyat* for it in 1875 Since then, about 1894, the Sonthal Mostagir also sold his right, and a Dhangar, possibly the representative of the original Dhangar Mostagir, has been sold up.

IX.—Village Arendra. Intact.—Details are given below regarding dispossession and the debts of all the villagers of this village. Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha settled the village with a Mostagir at a rental of Rs 177-11 15 for 421 bighas 14 cottahs 5 dhurs, the amount of the rent now paid through the Mostagir is Rs 209 for 345 bighas 10 cottahs. Some of them pay rent direct to the zamindar —

No.	Name.	Amount of land shown in Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's settlement papers	Amount of land lost	Present amount of land	Remarks	Debts		Rate of interest	Remarks
						Unsecured	Secured		
		B C D	B C D	B C D				Per cent	
1	Lakhan Manjhi	60 11 12¼		60 13 12¼	A bigha or so reclaimed, it is said	6 bis (1908) Rs 10 („)		50 25	Darhia. Sicoi
2	Chota „	10 15 0		10 15 0	A few bighas reclaimed, it is said	„ 5 („)		25	
3	Bara Harma ..	15 12 15¾		15 12 15¾	None said to have been reclaimed	2 bis („) 1 („)		50 50	Different *mahajans*
4	Chota Harma	12 10 12¼		12 10 12¼	Ditto ditto	„ („) 2 „ (1907)		50 50	
5	Jagan and Dhanai (his brother)	37 0 1½	26 0 0 –	11 0 1½	Land was originally mortgaged to the zamindar	5 „ (1908)	Rs 200	50 25	Holds no land Simple mortgage of 7 bighas
6	Chota Lakhan	17 8 15		17 8 15	A few *pattas* said to be reclaimed	2 bis (1908)	-	50	
7	Dhanu	31 18 8	17 0 0	About 14 18 8	Unknown how the land was lost to zamindar	Rs 3 („) 3 bis („) Rs 6 (1907)		25 50 25	
8	Tika ...	30 18 7		30 18 7	Three bighas said to be reclaimed	„ 5 (1908)		25	
9	Chaitan	34 14 6		34 14 6	None said to be reclaimed	5 bis („) 1 „ („)		50 50	
10	Rupai –	18 9 12¼	5 0 0	About 11 9 12¼	Unknown how the land was lost to zamindar	Rs 14 („) 6 („)	50 bis	25 25	*Kathbandi 5 bis a year for 10 years (Two ans a maund due paid)
11	Karan	33 19 1¼	33 10 3¼	8 11 0	Abandoned the village for three years and lost the original land	4 bis („) 2 „ („) 1 „ („) Rs 8 („) 12 („)		50 50 50 25 25	
12	Daso	13 17 0¾		13 17 0¾	Also reclaimed about a bigha.	1 bis 16 aris (1908) 1 bis (1908) Rs 17 („)		50 50 25	
13	Pirthi	26 10 1½	–	20 10 3½	Also reclaimed about 3 bighas	2 bis 10 aris (1908) Rs 10 (1908)	Rs 12 (1908)	25 50 25	Simple bond
14	Durga	13 6 1½	2 0 0	11 6 1½	Said to have been taken away because he could not pay rent	No debts	–		
15	Motha –	9 15 15¾		9 15 15¾		Rs 10 2½ aris	Rs 60 (1904)	25 25 50	Simple mortgage 4 bighas Rs 30 repaid
16	Buradu	4 8 15¾		4 8 15¾	Also reclaimed some 2 bighas	1½ bis (1907)			Repaid 1 bis
17	Lalu (deceased), son-in-law of the above	10 4 18¾	10 4 18¾	6 0 0	Lost on account of debts to zamindar *mahajan*. New settlement				Usufructuary mortgage of 1 bighas for interest only cultivated
18	Ram	20 10 0	20 10 0		Sold up after mortgage to zamindar *mahajan*	1 bis, 13 aris (1908)	Rs 49		This land in another village
19	Mohan	3 9 14¾		3 9 14¾		2 bis (1908)		50	
20	Naran	3 19 9		4 4 3		2 „ grain (1907) 19 aris (1907)	2 bis (1907) Rs 1	50 25	Simple bond 20 aris repaid
21	Bhagat			9 0 0	Not in Bhuban Mohan Raha's *patta*	Rs 1 (1908)		25	
22	Sukhu Bauri	24 15 9½	24 15 9½		4 bighas 2 cottahs sold to a *mahajan* and all sold up for rent				No debts
23	Mahesh Bauri	44 0 9½	44 0 9½	19 19 0	Sold up for rent		6 bis (1908) Rs 60 („)	50 25	Simple bond

X—Dhamnpur Broken—This is a typical instance of what happens to a Sonthal hamlet or village when it comes within easy reach of civilization, and there are no fresh jungles close at hand to clear The village belongs to the Mulhati Babus, amongst whom only a settlement can disclose who are zamindars and who are raiyats One of the zamindars has given his son and others some of the land in the village, the son, a mukhtar, now poses as a raiyat, and says the Sonthals have become his under-raiyats Apparently up to 1889 the Sonthals paid their rent for their *khuntkatti* lands, through a Mostagir, Gopinath Manjhi, but in that year his right, together with his land, passed by Civil Court decree on account of debts to the zamindar-*mahajans* Gradually all the land of the Sonthals has passed into the hands of the zamindar-*mahajans* on account of their indebtedness, and the Sonthals have either taken fresh leases, renewed every seven years, of the worst land, or else work in the neighbourhood, or have left other villagers to work as daily labourers

Tibru, the present Manjhi, has lost all his land to the zamindars on account of his debts Sale deeds for 1 bigha 13 cottahs for Rs 5 in 1889, 3 bighas for Rs 15 in 1895, and 28 bighas for Rs 139 in the same year, have been produced At present he holds a lease for seven years of 42 bighas 8 cottahs of land, mostly upland, on a rental of Rs 12, and is deemed an under-raiyat He, as well as the other holders of temporary leases, have been cultivating for more than seven years He has no debts His only uncle has gone to another village

Sagram, the Paranick, has similarly lost all his land, but has received three bighas on a rental of Rs. 3, for which he gets no receipts He only owes 15 aris

Kando Manjhi pays Rs. 8 for 14 bighas 10 cottahs of poor land on a temporary arrangement He owes 9 bis

Sagram, the only other member of Kando and Sagram's family, has gone to Sitalpur near Belpur.

Bhoto Manjhi has similarly lost all his land, and now only cultivates a little reclaimed land, for which no rent is paid except goats at the *Kali Puja*. He owes Rs. 20. His father and uncle are in Sitalpur, in Bolpur, working as labourers *krishani*

Raghu Manjhi came into the village as a son-in-law. He cultivates 22 bighas of poor land on the septennial arrangement referred to above for Rs 7. He owes about 2 bis

Suna Manjhi, the Jog-Paranick, lost all his land because he abandoned the village on account of illness, and now cultivates nothing He works *krishani* His two brothers are in other villages working as labourers. His three first cousins are working as servants in other places.

Bishun has lost all his lands on account of debts. He works *krishani*

Dasrat, the Jog-Manjhi, lost all his lands, because he abandoned the village on account of illness He works *krishani*. One of his brothers is now a carpenter at Bolpur, and two others are working *krishani* in another village

Out of the representatives of the remaining three other houses, who did not appear, two have lost all their lands

There is some trouble between the purchasers of the village lands, some of whom are zamindars, and some are not The Sonthals of this village were particularly sullen, and tried to make out that matters were very much worse than they were, though the facts are quite bad enough, and it would seem almost impossible that they could be worse

XI. Village Tehlbandi. Broken former proprietor, Madhu Sudan Chaudhri.—The village was measured by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, and found to contain 289 bighas 15 cotahs 14¾ dhurs. The total of the rents paid by the raiyats was Rs 80 At the Deputy Collector's rates, the rental should have been Rs 71-9-17 But from a settlement paper of the time it appears that five reks of the village were cultivated (1881) by seven Sonthals at Rs 5-4 a rek, the remainder was cultivated by Dhangars and a Bengali. The rent paid by the Sonthals was therefore about Rs 21 for possibly about 90 bighas The settlement was not accepted by the proprietor, who or whose representative in interest later raised the rents to Re 1 a bigha Present rent receipts show that only three Sonthals now cultivate altogether 56 bighas 14 cottahs and 15 dhurs (originally 2½ reks) on a total rent of Rs. 55-5 As might be expected all the other Sonthals have been sold up for rent, and cultivate no land now. There are, besides the three cultivators, twelve other Sonthal houses in the village, whose members work *krishani* or as labourers Approximately 50 per cent. of the cultivation held in 1880 has thus gone into the hands of Dikkus

XII—Village Bajpara Broken—This is a small village, which was measured in 1879—82 by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha, and a settlement effected at a rental of Rs 18-0-2 for 84 bighas 8 cottahs 17 dhurs

Rent receipts show that this rent was paid up to about 1897. Subsequently the village was sold up for arrears of rent, and a mukhtear or tout bought it He proceeded to raise the rents, and the Sonthals now pay about Rs 93 The Mostagir, who had about a quarter of the acreage of the village, has lost this owing to the rent sale, and one Champa, who could not pay the increased rent, has abandoned his land. This land, except Champa's 9 bighas, has been given out again to the Sonthals Below are the areas and rents of Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha's time, and those of the present time

Report by Moulvi Saiyed Muhammed Nasiruddin

Areas and rent settled by Babu Bhuban Mohan Raha. Area. B	C	D.	Rent. Rs	A	G.	Present Day. Area. B	C.	D.	Rent. Rs	A.	G.
9	13	11	2	6	12	6	0	0	7	0	0
24	10	15	4	8	6	14	18	0	14	14	8
7	18	18	1	11	15	6	16	5	6	15	0
9	19	0	1	15	3	13	13	10	13	11	6
9	0	4	2	7	9	14	14	3	15	0	0
7	4	1	1	7	0	4	11	9½	4	13	5
10	15	14	2	4	12	2	17	5	3	0	0
5	16	14	1	3	15	4	14	12	4	12	0
						19	16	11	19	15	0
84	18	17	18	0	12	2	0	1	2	0	0
						91	9	16½	92	11	7

MAUBESWAR THANA

XIII—Jetia Broken—This village is peculiar, not because of any particular apparent transfer of Sonthal's land, but because of the light it throws on the subject of high rents for increase of cultivation The village belongs to the Mohant of Mollarpur In 1879 a *patta* for Rs 410 for 2,078 bighas 14 cottahs was given by him or his predecessor to the Mostagir. Subsequently the village was resumed, and it came under the settlement of Munshi Nundji in 1894 The settlement papers show that there were at that time 25 Sonthal raiyats in the village cultivating an area of 645 bighas, at a total rental of Rs 493, and there were 23 Dikkus in the village, both Muhammadans and Hindus. The present *jamabandi* shows that there are now 32 Sonthal raiyats cultivating an area of 640 bighas at a total rental of Rs. 522.

There has been a certain amount of transfer, owing to rent sales which finds an equivalent, not in the loss of the lands from the Sonthals as a whole, but in their increased indebtedness. The following are instances—

Gobind Manjhi, who held 87 bighas, 4 cottahs 5 dhurs on a rental of Rs 70, was sold up for arrears of rent, but his son, together with one Lakhan Manjhi, took a fresh settlement of the majority of the land at Rs. 33-0-5 each for 42 bighas 9 cottahs 17½ dhurs each The remaining portion of the best land is cultivated by a Dikku There is a *kistbandi* on this land of Rs 700, payable in annual instalments, said to be due on account of rent due by Gobind, when Mostagir of the village, but more probably on account of the fresh *bandobast* taken by his son. Gobind's other debts are 7 bis of grain and Rs. 20 taken at 6 annas in the rupee interest towards the payment of the rent.

Khela complains that he reclaimed some land, but could not finish the reclamation entirely, so the zamindar gave it to some one else He owes 5 bis of grain and Rs. 20 which he took in 1906, and which at 6 annas interest has now become Rs. 30-13 after deducting a payment of Rs. 7. Of the 5 bis of grain, he had the ill-luck to lose 2 bis by fire, but a compassionate *mahajan* then reduced the rate of interest from 50 per cent. to 25 per cent.

Shugru Manjhiani has mortgaged 6 bighas out of her 28 bighas (rental Rs. 11-2) to a *mahajan*

Chunu complains that he reclaimed some land, which the zamindars settled with some one else. He owes about 6 bis to one *mahajan*, and to another he says he owes about 2 bis, the *mahajan* however says it is 10 or 12 bis, and if he does not pay, he will turn the grain into a money debt and bring a case Besides this, Chunu owes about Rs 23 on a debt of Rs. 20, and of which he has paid Rs 8, the buffalo given as security for the debt died He has also got a *kistbandi* for arrears of rent, details unknown

Khudu Manjhi once possessed 42 bighas 17 cottahs 10 dhurs at a rental of Rs. 39-10-10 but three years ago he was sold up for arrears of rent, because the *mahajan* did not leave him enough money wherewith to pay the rent This land is now cultivated by Lakhan Manjhi of Girijole He now works *krishani*, and has only a debt of 2 bis

Sugda has 46 bighas 7 cottahs on a rental of Rs 28-12 His debts are about 6 bis and Rs 25 odd

Parhu mortgaged some 12 bighas of his land to a *mahajan*, which he subsequently transferred to that *mahajan*, and has now 30 bighas left.

Surjya, who took a *bandobast* of some of the lands sold up and who now cultivates 11 bighas 10 cottahs on a rental of Rs. 9, executed a *kistbandi* of Rs. 4 a year for rent due by the previous tenant

Thus within fifteen years at least one-fifth of the land held by the Sonthals has been sold up for rent. *Kistbandis* for arrears of rent are common, and it is believed that the above does not exhaust the list

Recently reclaimed lands cultivated in the villages were measured in 1913, and now rents for three successive years are being collected

The result is that of 59 bighas 16 cottahs of prepared rice land, 25 bighas 1 cottah upland and 18 bighas 18 cottahs *patit* have been rented at Rs 96-6

This is based on the following rates —

	Rs	A	
Rice lands .	1	4	
Upland	0	6	
Patit good	1	4	for unprepared prospective
Fair .	1	0	paddy land

Now the rates settled in Munshi Nundji's settlement were as follows —

	Rs	A
1st class land (rice)	1	0
2nd ,, ,, , .	0	12
3rd ,, ,, ,,	0	9
4th ,, ,, ,,	0	6
Uplands	0	4
Homestead ..	Rent-free	

I saw the land of one of the excess measurements which was assessed at Rs 1-4 a bigha, at the utmost it was only 2nd class land, and probably a portion of it 3rd class land, and should have been assessed only at 9 annas or 12 annas a bigha The result is that the raiyats are at once being compelled to pay for three years rents at an annual rental comparatively much higher than their present rents It is true that for some reason the rents recorded in the settlement papers appear to be at higher rates than the rents settled for the pargana, yet this makes no difference to the fact that the present classification of the new lands is too high It should be noted that an attempt is being made to evade the law by collecting three years' rents at once The raiyats are, of course, upset. The landlord would call them trespassers, but in a country when the process of reclamation is allowed and recognised, the use of the words "trespassers or encroachment" is an absurdity

XIV.—Hamirpur Broken.—This village came under the settlement of Munshi Nundji in 1894 It is held by one Ram Kisto Ghosh, under the Mohant of Mollarpur, on a rental of Rs 75. At that time there were 13 Sonthal raiyats holding 259 bighas 18 cottahs and 4 chittaks on a total rental of Rs 97-12, and one Dikku holding 23 bighas 7 cottahs 8 chittaks on a rental of Rs 2. Now there are 11 Sonthal raiyats holding 173 bighas

19 cottahs 12 chittaks on a total rental of Rs. 74-8-10, and 6 Dikkus holding 59 bigha 5 cottahs on a total rental of Rs. 47-9, the rest having gone to the proprietor. Thus one-third of the cultivation has gone out of the hands of the Sonthals in fifteen years.

Lakhan only had homestead land, which is now *parti* Artun Manjhi's land is now *khas*, he left when his father died. Muchai Manjhi's land was abandoned, said to be uncultivated now.

Nabin Manjhi died childless, land said to be *parti*

Tara and Ana gave up their cultivation, because the rent was too high for the class of soil

Chaitan was sold up for arrears of rent. The above are the landlords' reasons for the loss of land, the tenants were not examined

XV.—Rampur Broken—This village belongs to the Mahant of Mollarpur, but is held by an intermediate tenure-holder It was settled by Munshi Nundji in 1892. During these settlement operations, there was a large tract of Dhangar lands appertaining to this village, held by the Sonthals, and in this they used to grow *marua*, *kodo*, etc The Sonthals got that tract of Dhangar lands measured and included within their holdings They have been dispossessed of those Dhangar lands by the present Dikku intermediate tenure-holders The latter have also indirectly admitted this dispossession, although they contest and dispute the inclusion of those lands within the Sonthal holdings during the survey and settlement operations (which they regard as binding only upon the Mohant and the then intermediate tenure-holder!). The present intermediate tenure-holders have not followed the settlement record-of-rights at all. Paddy lands have been measured by them subsequent to the settlement operations, and they grant rent receipts according to this measurement The major portion of these uplands are lying *parti*, and are treated as *khas* lands of the intermediate tenure-holder, who has settled some portion of them with Dikkus

Report by Maulvi Sayed Mahammed Nazimuddin.

The following list shows how much land the Sonthals have lost, and how rents are rising. It compares the landlord's present *jamabandi* with the record-of-rights of 1892 —

No	Name of raiyat as shown in settlement papers of 1892.	Name of raiyat now shown in tenure holder's papers	Area held in 1892.	Area now held and shown in the tenure-holder's papers	Rent in 1892.	Present rent	Remarks
			B C D	B C D	Rs. A G	Rs. A G	
1	Durga Manjhi	Durga Manjhi	18 17 8	5 0 0	9 0 0	10 0 0	Admitted by the tenure-holder that this Sonthal is not actually in possession of his lands This Sonthal left the village 6 or 7 years ago, abandoning his lands
2	Murrari	Murrari	16 14 0	9 10 0	6 0 0	7 8 0	Lost to *mahajan* Sheo Charum Moral 6 b ghas 18 cottahs land for debts
3	Chota Lakhan	Chota Lakhan Manjhi (now held by his brother)	27 1 13	14 15 0	17 8 0	23 0 0	Hold all their paddy lands and have lost only *bhita bari* lands, which have been generally taken away from the Sonthals by the tenure-holder
4	Baluk	Baluk Manjhi (now held by his son-in-law Chanderai)	26 10 8	9 10 0	10 0 0	12 8 0	
5	Chota Surban	Chota Surban Manjhi	32 15 4	14 0 0	14 0 6	21 4 0	
6	Bhajan		40 7 4		4 8 0		Abandoned
7	Basta	Basta Manjhi	39 13 0	20 15 8	26 0 0	32 8 0	Holds all his paddy lands, and has lost only *bhita-bari* lands, as has been the case with other Sonthals
8	Sindhai		50 10 12		6 0 0	–	Lost to the Dikku tenure-holder for arrears of rent
9	Hinda (now his son Lapsa)		32 19 0		25 0 0		Sold up in auction for arrears of rent and purchased by the tenure-holder
10	Sona	Sona Manjhi (now held by his son Suraj)	38 8 4	18 18 0	25 0 0	31 4 0	Lost his uplands to tenure-holder His land is mortgaged.
11	Sham Sirkar		39 4 8		19 0 0	..	Lost to money lender for debts, after usufructuary mortgage
12	Dugur	Dugur Manjhi (now held by his son Dhanai)	40 2 12	10 0 0	11 4 0	15 0 0	Dispossessed of all lands by the tenure-holder, though 10 bighas lands are shown in the name of the Sonthal in the village papers
13	Thakurdas	Thakurdas Manjhi	3 1 4	3 15 0	3 12 0	3 12 0	
14	Bharat Paranick	Bharat M Paranick (now held by his son Harna)	102 19 12	37 0 0	51 9 0	51 4 0	Holds all his paddy lands and has lost only *bhita-bari* lands just like other Sonthals
15	Thakur Das and others	Thakur Das and others	52 13 0	38 9 8	18 8 0	37 4 0	Hold only 16 bighas lands. Have lost 16 bighas 9 cottahs 10 dhurs lands to money-lender, besides being dispossessed of their *bhita-bari* lands by the tenure-holder.
16	Bara Shurban	Bara Shurban Manjhi	38 10 0	24 10 0	26 0 0	32 8 0	Holds all his paddy lands, and has lost only *bhita* lands just like the other Sonthals.
17		Hari Manjhi		2 0 0	—	3 12 0	New Settlement.
18		Gada „	–	2 15 0	—	3 0 0	
19		Buran „		5 0 0		5 0 0	
20		Morul „	—	5 0 0	–	5 0 0	
21		Dumka „		5 0 0		7 8 0	
22		Salkan		5 0 0	–	7 8 0	
		Total	609 18 0	224 17 0	273 1 5	315 8 0	

Nos 1 and 12 have no land, though land is shown in the *jamabandi*.

SADDER SUBDIVISION.

SURI THANA.

Mahamed Bazar Outpost

XVI.—Kusam-Kandar Quasi-intact —This village has not come under any settlement Originally there was a Mostagir of the village, who was alone responsible for the rents The original rent of the village was Rs. 32, then it became Rs. 45, and finally in 1896, according to the *patta* which was given then, it was raised to Rs. 85, which it now is. But the Mostagir in 1907 sold half of his right to a *mahajan*, Pertab Mandal. The *mahajan* has not yet had time to raise the rents

The following table shows the approximate amount lost by the Sonthals, and how. The actual amount of land held was not ascertainable, but in each case the best land has been taken by the *mahajan*.

According to the Sonthals, the *mahajans* now cultivate 12 annas of the rice land of the village. *Man* land for each official is still said to exist in the village —

No	Name	Rent.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts		Remarks
					Secured	Unsecured	
		Rs. A					
1	Paru, son of Hingu	85 0	Half share of village	Sale-deed 1907 for Rs 605 to Pertab Mandal.	...	3 bis (1907) .. 3 ,, (1908) .. Rs 15 (1907) ..	To Pertab Mandal *derhia* 50 per cent To Udai Sunri To Udai Sunri *siki* or 25 per cent interest
			B C D				
2	Baka ..	1 0	About 3 0 0	Usufructuary mortgage for principal and interest for 6 years from 1904 to Hona Sil	..	3 aris (1908)	To Udai Sunri.
3	Leda	1 0	0 8 2 About 1 0 0	Sale-deeds for Rs 12 to Udai Sunri (1906) Usufructuary mortgage for ten years from 1905 to Kuar Manjhi who lent Rs 10 of borrowed money to Leda	4 bis (1908)		Turned into money at a rate of 1 rupee=2 aris, became Rs 40 for which simple mortgage of 5 bighas was executed in favour of Joga Sunri, selling price at the time was 3 aris=1 rupee If repaid in grain 50 per cent. would be charged, if in money 25 per cent
						Rs. 2 (1908)	Interest ' chota " *mahajan* fixed it at the time of loan the rate at which grain should be repaid in this case at [illegible] to the rupee
4	Kuar ..	2 6	..		..	3 bis 3½ kaths	To different *mahajans* [illegible] bis taken altogether [illegible] but of the 7½ bis due 3 bis 4 kaths repaid ([illegible] 4 aris)
5	Sidam	6 0	About 2 9 0	Sold for Rs 12 to Surma Sunri (also a usufructuary mortgage about to expire).		Rs 5 (1907)	To Udai Sunri.
6	Ram	6 0			..	10 kaths (1908)	Principal 10 kaths [illegible] not the interest 5 kaths
7	Palu	1 8					A youth
8	Gumda	4 0		..	Rs 60	7 bis (1909)	Simple mortgage [illegible] Hona Tambuli [illegible] 4½ bis still due on account of remainder and interest to Udai Sunri
9	Sham	2 0	2 3 0 3 8 0	Sold to Bharat Sunri in 1901 for Rs 178 Sold to Bharat Sunri in 1906 for Rs 195	Rs. 55		Simple deed 1 bigha [illegible] cottah not to be transferred
			2 0 0	Usufructuary mortgage in 1904 for 7 years, for principal and interest	Rs. 40	2 bis (1908)	Secured by a simple deed
10	Anu No 1	6 0	7 10 0	Sold			All debts repaid this year
11	Anu ,, 2	4 0	2 0 0	Usufructuary mortgage to Jadu Manjhi for nine years	..		
12	Jolha	3 0				..	All debts repaid this year
13	Jadu	2 0		Also pays Re 1 for some reclaimed land			
14	Bikram	1 4	1 18 0	Sold to Mohan Gorain for Rs 95. A usufructuary mortgage to Bharat Sahu has just expired		3½ bis (1908)	
15	Paltan	2 0	1 0 0	Usufructuary mortgage for interest and principal Another has just expired.		Rs. 7 (1906) 2 (1908) 6 aris (1907).	
16	Mansingh	2 0	0 6 11	Sold to Bharat Sunri in 1906 for Rs. 17	..		Debts unknown.
17	Larha	4 0		Also pays Re 1 for reclaimed land.		Rs. 4 (1909) ..	Ten kaths due on an old loan
18	Hari ..	2 0	3 0 0 1 11 0	Sold to Bharat Sahu in 1901 for Rs. 245 Sold to Bharat Sahu in 1902 for Rs 94.			Says he has no debts.
19	Jam	4 0	0 13 5 0 16 0	Sold to Hona Sil in 1908 for Rs 57. Sold	..	.. ..	
	Other sales.						
20	Pharo	—	1 2 0	Sold to Jarna Mahto for Rs 49 (1907)			These are sale deeds produced later by *mahajans*, whose executants have not been identified with Nos. 1—19
21	Matia	—	0 8 8	Sold to Mohan Gorain for Rs. 12-6 (1906)		—	
22	Paru son of Bhagan		1 0 0	Sold to Bharat Sunri for Rs 41 (1909)	—	...	
23	Kharaj	—	1 1 0	Sold to Bharat Sunri for Rs. 86 (1901)		—	
24	Karu ..	—	0 12 2	Sold to Bharat Sunri for Rs. 18-12 (1905)		— —	
25	Karan	—	0 4 6	Sold to Bharat Sunri for Rs. 12-4 (1908)		....	
26	Shyam ..		0 2 18	Sold to Bharat Sunri for Rs. 6-8 (1907)		...	

RAJNAGAR OUTPOST

XVII.—Maidarpur : Broken (18 house of Sonthals and 5 houses of Domes).—The Sonthal Mostagiri ceased to exist 10 or 12 years ago. The Mostagir is said to have been arbitrarily dispossessed for arrears of rent. Sixteen Sonthals hold lands, and four Sonthals have entirely lost their lands to *mahajans* by private sale in satisfaction of their debts

Maulvi Saiyed Muhammad Nasrud Din's reports

The old village *jama*, as paid by the Sonthals through the Sonthal Mostagir, was Rs 102 , now the rent realized from the 16 Sonthal houses comes to Rs 127-7.

From the account book of the former Sonthal Mostagir, it appears that the rate of rent formerly for ½ rek or 7 bighas was Rs. 3-8. But now the rent has been enhanced to Rs. 5-4 for 7 bighas .—

No	Area of lands now held	Land lost	Old rent	Present rent.	Debts.		Security
					Secured	Unsecured	
	B. c	B c	Rs A G	Rs A.	Rs. A		
1	18 0	.. ..	7 8 0	13 8	...	...	
2	18 0	... .	9 5 13	18 8	.	5½ maps.	
3	14 0	1 0	7 0 0	10 8	...	Rs 15+3 maps 6 sulis	
4	14 0	1 0	7 0 0	10 8	.	3 sulis.	
5	21 0	.. ...	9 2 6	13 8		.	
6	...	½ rek	3 8 0	.	. .	...	
7	5 0	4 0	3 8 0	1 8	.	34 maps 7 sulis.	
8	⅛ rek and 1½ B	1 10	3 8 0	5 0	9 3	...	2 B 10 C
9	½ rek less 5 10	5 10	3 8 0	5 0	...	6 maps 6 sulis	
10	⅓ rek	⅙ rek	3 8 0	9 8	...	4 maps 6 sulis.	
11	. ..	¼ "	2 5 3	...	...	...	
12	½ rek	......	3 8 0	5 4	.	23 maps 5 sulis.	
13	6 0	1 0	3 8 0	5 0	...	2 maps 2 sulis.	
14	......	½ "	3 8 0	...	..	...	
15	1 rek or 17 10 (R receipt.)	......	9 0 0	13 4	..	13½ maps	
16	¼ rek or 4 10	......	2 5 3	3 8	.	27 "	
17	15 15	5 0	3 8 0	11 9	...	Rs 52-8+ 2 maps 2 sulis.	
18	4 10	0 14	1 8 0	2 10	...	Rs 1-12+ 3 maps	
19	2 3	2 7	1 12 0	3 8	.	11¼ sulis.	
20	......	7 0	3 8 0	...	. .		

8 Sulis = 1 Map. 20 Pie = 1 Suli 2 Pie = 1 seer (kutcha) 1 Seer (pucca) = 2½ seers (kutcha)

XVIII.—Kuralmatia . Broken.—The Sonthal headman system ceased in the village about 9 or 10 years ago. The zamindar took away the Mostagiri right from the Sonthal headman, as he was in arrears of rent. The latter was dispossessed of his *man* lands, but along with the other Sonthal raiyats remained in possession of his raiyati lands.

Calculating a rek of land as equal to 16 bighas, the Sonthals have lost two-thirds of the cultivation of the village.

XIX.—Korrakund · Intact (30 houses of Sonthals).—Only 15 houses hold lands The village is intact Ganesh Manjhi is the Mostagir The old village *jama* was Rs 23 The present *jama* is Rs 35 for 154 bighas 12 cottahs 12 dhurs.

There are 10 non-resident cultivating Dikkhus holding lands in the village They are all holding Sonthali lands, which have gone to them by private sale in satisfaction of debts

Nine Sonthals, who hold 81 bighas 3 cottahs 12 dhurs, have lost permanently by private sale 25 bighas 5 cottahs 4 dhurs, and by usufructuary mortgage about 15 bigahs to *mahajans*.

XX—*Niyuri*: *Broken*.—There are 21 or 22 houses of Sonthals in this village, but only eight or nine houses of Sonthals now hold lands Originally the Sonthal headman system existed in the village. Seven or eight years ago the village was privately measured by the patnidar. It was then that the Sonthal Mostagiri ceased The old village *jama* (as alleged by the Sonthals) was Rs. 12, and it was enhanced to Rs 50 by the purchaser, Indra Narain Mandal The present village *jama* is Rs. 100

Seven Sonthals, who now hold 80 bighas of land, have lost in all about 71 bigahs 10 cottahs to *mahajans* for debts; the loss of about 35 bighas has been occasioned by *ex-parte* decrees, and the rest about 41 bighas 10 cottahs have been lost by private sale for debts

The patnidar has only to pay Rs. 16-8 to the zamindar as the village *jama*.

Four Sonthals have debts amounting to 22½ *maps* paddy, and Rs 343-9 (Rs 178-14 being Government agricultural loans which is secured by the mortgage of 16 bighas)—

No XVIII—(Above)

No.	Area now held.	Land lost.	Debts		Security.
			Secured	Unsecured.	
	B C D	B. C D. Man lands +	Rs. A.		
1	21 0 0	10 0 0	...	27¾ maps	
2	4 10 0	3 0 0	...	12 maps 7 sulis	
3	4 10 0	3 13 0	...	Rs 6-4+6 maps	
4	4 10 0	7 13 0	...	9 maps.	
5	4 10 0	8 0 0	...	Rs 7-8.	
6	4 10 0	13 0 0	100 0	...	Simple mortgage 4 bighas and 3 head of cattle
7	3 0 0	7 0 0	..	.....	
8	½ rek less 1 0 0	1 0 0	..	Rs. 26-9 + 14¼ maps	
9	Ditto	1 0 0	...	......	
10	.....	1 rek	...	......	
11	.....	1½ ,,	...	.. ...	
12	..	1 ,,	..	......	
Total	45 10 0 +½ rek	54 6 0 +3½ reks.			

No XIX—(Above)

No.	Area now held.	Land lost.	Secured	Unsecured.	Security.
1	8 0 0	8 0 0	31 14	Re 1	8 bighas Government agricultural loan
2	17 0 0	3 0 0	38 4	15 maps paddy ..	
3	26 13 1½	.....	...	Rs 15 + 11 maps 2 sulis paddy.	
4	2 1 3	0 10 0	...	......	
5	2 0 0	7 15 4	62 0	......	2 bighas.
6	1 9 8	1 0 0	..	... ..	
7	8 0 0	2 0 0	...	......	
8	6 0 0	3 0 0	...	1 map 4 sulis.	
9	10 0 0	..	...	......	
Total	81 3 12½	25 5 4	...	...	

No. XX—(Above).

No.	Area now held.	Land lost.	Secured	Unsecured.	Security.
1	8 or 9 0 0	about 26 0 0	168 12	11 maps 5 sulis	12 bighas Government agricultural loan.
2	9 0 0	12 10 0	134 11	......	Simple mortgage
3	9 0 0	21 0 0	10 2	......	Five bighas Government agricultural loan.
4	9 0 0	4 0 0	..	.....	
5	14 0 0	4 0 0	...	4 maps 4 sulis.	
6	12 0 0	4 0 0	...	6 ,, 6 ,,	
7	18 0 0	......	...	...	
Total...	80 0 0	71 10 0	.	..	

APPENDIX I (*b*).

BANKURA DISTRICT.

BANKURA THANA

CHHAINA OUTPOST

I—Village Sengasgora Broken—

		Rs.			Rs	
Previous rent	...	61	Present rent	...	85	Total area reduced.

An old village now broken The Sonthals have been living in this village for four generations At first they lost some lands for debts, at last some of them transferred the whole village to a Dikku in liquidation of debts incurred in a civil suit with the tenure-holders But, as the transferors had no right to transfer others' lands, the transferee got *kabuliyats* from the remaining raiyats, and became the immediate landlord. He has retained the best lands, and resettled the rest with the original owners Though the whole village has been sold up, only cultivated lands lost or held are shown in the statement The lands of those Sonthals who did not join in the joint deed of sale, but simply accepted the transferee as the landlord by executing *kabuliyats* and have been allowed to retain all their lands, have been supposed as not transferred —

Reports by Maulvi Ekramude

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
1, 2, 3	12	4	Sold for debts				
		16	Sold for debts, the transferee resettling 12 bighas shown in column 3 at a rental of Rs 18 Rent for all the land is Rs 12		64 maps of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent A decree already obtained by money-lender for Rs 569 including interest
4	10	10	Sold in auction for debts		...	...	
		10	Sold for debts but resettled by the transferee				
5	6	4	Sold for debts	4 maps of paddy			Interest 37·5 per cent
		6	Sold for debts but resettled by the transferee at a rent of Rs 6 Rent for all the land was Rs 4				
6	8	1	Sold for debts		Rs 186	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage The amount claimed in the civil suit instituted
7	12	4	Sold for debts	6 maps of paddy			Interest 37 5 per cent
8	4	6	Purchased in auction sale by money-lender for debts who resettled 4 bighas shown in column 3 at a rent of Rs 6 and 2½ maunds of paddy the rent was Rs 4 for all the land				
9, 10	...			Rs. 120	...		Interest 25 per cent
				100 maps of paddy			Ditto ditto
11	13			15 maps of paddy			Ditto ditto
12, 13, 14				...		...	
15, 16	12	.		Rs 85			Ditto ditto
				68 maps of paddy			Ditto ditto
17		...			Rs 400	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage.
18, 19, 20, 21, 22	30			...			Rs 1 786 including interest claimed in the civil suit instituted.
	...			.			
23	22		2 bighas under usufructuary mortgage		Rs 80	2 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage
24	5						

II—Katharia Broken—

		Rs			Rs	
Previous rent	.	120	Present rent	...	150 and 50 maps of paddy.	Total area reduced

An old and large village, but broken The present headman is the fifth in descent from the original clearer of the soil The villagers at first sold some of their lands to different persons for debts, but at last the majority of them transferred the whole village to a Dikku in liquidation of debts incurred in a civil suit with the tenure holders But as the majority had no right to transfer others' lands, the transferee got *kabuliyats* from the remaining raiyats and became the immediate landlord. He has resettled all the lands with the original owners at high rates of *sajha* (produce-rent) and money.

20 seers = 1 suli.
2 sulis = 1 man
8 sulis = 1 map

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
1	8 bighas	—	½ bigha under usufructuary mortgage	..	12 maunds of paddy Rs 15 8	½ bigha	Usufructuary mortgage
2	8 "			4½ maps of paddy	15 8	1 "	Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent All interest paid
3		1 bigha .	Sold in auction for debts				Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent All interest paid
4	8 bighas	2 "	" to money lender for debts	4½ maps of paddy	.	1 bigha	Interest 25 per cent
5	—	8 .	" for debts, but re settled by the transferee at a rent of Rs 6 and 1 maunds of paddy valued at Rs 6 Previous rent for which area was Rs 12				
6	—				Rs 30 0	2½ bighas	Usufructuary mortgage
		2½ bighas	Under usufructuary mortgage				
7			Arbitrary eviction by the present landlord for arrears of rent				
8	10 bighas	4 bighas					
9							
10	11 bighas	12 bighas	Sold to money lender for debts				
		7 .	" in auction for debts	5 maps of paddy			Interest 25 per cent
		13 .	Sold for debts but re settled by the transferee at a rental of Rs 11 and 1½ maunds of paddy Previous rent for whole area was Rs 5			—	
		2	Surrender of jote for arrears of rent after re settlement				
11	5 bighas	8 .	Sold for debts, but re settled by the transferee				
		3	Sold to present landlord for arrears of rent after re-settlement			.	
12	5 "	10½ .	Sold for debts but re settled by the transferee		—		
		5½ "	Arbitrary eviction by the present landlord for arrears of rent, after re settlement				
13							
14	5 bighas						
15	3 "	—		Rs 50			Ditto ditto
16		—					
17	6½ bighas			Rs 40			Ditto ditto
18	15 "	13½ cottahs	Sold to money lender for debts				
	16½ cottahs	13 bighas 6½ cottahs	Sold for debts but re-settled by the transferee at Rs 20 1 6 and 5½ maunds of paddy			—	
19	11½ bighas	11½ bighas	Sold for debts but re settled by the transferee at a rent of Rs 8 9 0 and 5 maunds of paddy Original rent was Rs 3 8 0 1½ bighas under usufructuary mortgage		Rs 60	1½ bighas	Usufructuary mortgage
20	11	6 "	Sold for debts but re-settled by the transferee at a rent of Rs 5 12 + 5½ maunds of paddy				
			Original rent was Rs 3-8 for whole area				
21		4 "	Sold in auction for debts		Rs 60	2½ bighas	Simple mortgage Interest 5 maps of paddy per cent All interest paid
22	15 bighas	4 "	Sold to money lender for debts				
		7 Cottahs	Oral transfer to money lender for debts				
		9 bighas	Sold for debts	13 maps of paddy			Interest 25 per cent
		15	Sold for debts but re-settled by the transferee at a rent of Rs 14 + 6 maunds of paddy Original rent for whole area Rs 24	6 maps of paddy	—		Interest 37 5 per cent
23	—	4 .	Sold for debts	Rs 31			
24	20 bighas	2½ .	Sold to money lender for debts				
25	6 "	1 bigha	Ditto ditto		—		
26	10 "						
27	8 "	—					
28	3 "	—					
29	1 bigha						
30	1 "	2½ bighas	Sold to money lender for debts				
31	2 bighas						
32	½ "					—	
33	½ bigha						
34	3 bighas				—		

GANGAJALGHATI THANA.

SALTORA OUTPOST.

III.—Masaradih Broken —The present headman is the grandson of the original clearer of the soil The landlords had the lands of the Sonthals measured by their own amins, and increased the rent

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin.

IV —Lerua pahari Broken.—The present headman is the son of the original clearer of the soil. One bigha in this area is equal to 3,240 square feet; one cottah being equivalent to six cubits or nine feet. The area shewn in the statement has been converted into standard bighas of 14,400 square feet—

No. III—(Above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas.	
1	3	8	Sold to money-lender for debts.
2	....	..	...
3		8	Sold to money-lender for debts.
4	3	8	Ditto ditto.
5			
6	14	...	......
7			
8	...	14	Sold to money-lender for debts
9	...	...	......
10	10	..	......
11	5	5	Sold to money-lender for debts
12	10	...	...
13	14	. .	. .
14	...	6	Sold to money-lender for debts
15		14	Ditto ditto
16		14	Ditto ditto

No. IV—(Above).

1	32	2	Sold to money-lender for debts.
2	..	8	Sold in auction for debts.
3	.	...	......
4		...	.....
5	$1\frac{1}{3}$	5	The land held is under usufructuary mortgage Sold to money-lender for debts
6	...	30	Alleged to be a *benami* transaction in the name of the tenure-holder, in order to defraud the money-lender of his dues, the former misappropriating the land
7	.	...	......
8		...	......
9	..	...	..
10	24	2	Sold for debts.
11	..	...	.....
12	...	..	..

THANA ONDA.

TALDANGRA OUTPOST.

Report by Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nazirudd n

V Metialia. Broken (60 houses of Sonthals)—Age of the village may be traced back to three generations

2 The Sonthal headman sold his right years ago, and all the Sonthal raiyats under him were dispossessed Now only five or six Sonthal houses have got lands, and the others work as labourers.

3 They are regarded as *kurfa parjas*, or under-raiyats, and have held their lands since a re-settlement about a quarter of a century ago—

Serial No.	Land now held	Land lost	Debts (unsecured)
	B. C. D.		
1	... ..	......	.....
2	72 2 10	......	......
3	13 14 0	......	.... .
4	16 2 0	......	1 map $1\frac{1}{4}$ sulis
5	9 14 5	......	2 maps $6\frac{3}{4}$ sulis
6	4 5 0	.....	Ditto ...
7	9 14 0	......	1 Ara 2 kuris
8	5 0 0	......	1 Map 7 sulis $2\frac{1}{2}$ pies
Total	130 11 15		

16 kuris = 1 ara 8 seers = 1 kuri.

N. B.—The Sonthals hold lands after taking fresh settlements.

SIMLAPAL THANA

Reports by Maulvi Saiyid Mohammad Nasruddiu

VI —Jamirdihi *Intact* —This is purely a Sonthal village, having a population of 50 houses of Sonthals.

2 The village is held under a *mukurari* Mandali lease by certain Sonthals. Baraham Sonthal is the Mandal The Mandali right is divisible. The four heirs of the old Sonthal Mandal have separate raiyats under them, making collection of rents from their own raiyats. They all collectively make payment to the zamindar through the headman

3 The oldest village *jama* was Rs 10 But when the Sonthals had cleared the village, the *jama* was enhanced to Rs 40 The village *jama* of Rs 71 is now in accordance with a compromise effected in 1884 in a suit for enhancement of rent

4. Printed rent receipts are not given by the proprietor (Raja of Simlapal)—

Serial No	Land now held.	Lands lost	Debts		Security
			Unsecured	Secured	
1 2 3	25 bighas (sale deed executed respecting 15 bighas, and again settlement taken at Rs 21 rent from the purchaser-*mahajan*)	......	2 Rs 18-12 and 3 aras 3 26 aras		
4 5 6	12 bighas 10 cottahs	12 bighas 10 cottahs so'd for debts. ...			
7 8	25 bighas				
9 10 11 12	20 "	5 bighas sold to *mahajan* for debt Alleged arbitrary eviction of 2½ bighas by the *mahajan*	51 maps 7 kuris 4 pies Rs 10		
13	16 bighas				
14	.....	16 bighas (arbitrary eviction by *mahajan* who settled the lands with other Sonthals.			
15	10 or 12 bighas				
16	9 bighas. ...	...			
17		6 bighas			
18	......	......	18 maps taken originally (Not known when)		
19	21 bighas ...	......			
20					
21	......	5 bighas sold to *mahajan* for debt			
22	4 bighas 10 cottahs	4 bighas			
Total	133	48—10			

VII —Dubrajpur *Broken.*—

1. The Sonthals cleared the village Now 20 houses of Sonthals have got lands, the others work as labourers or cultivate lands *bhagti*

2. The Sonthals had originally a *mukurari* lease of the village Ganga Manjhi Mandal sold this right to a *mahajan* in satisfaction of debts

3. The old village *jama* was Rs 319 The purchaser-*mahajan* fell into arrears, and the *mukurari* interest was bought by the zamindar himself at a rent sale in 1307 Since then the Sonthals have been paying rent separately to the zamindar The rent has been enhanced from Rs 9-12 to 12-4-6 + 1 ara ¼ kuri paddy + ½ pie *ghee* per rek by the zamindar, *i e*, to about double at a normal rate of paddy Rs 2 per maund.

KHATRA THANA.

VIII. Goberda Broken (16 houses).—Originally the Sonthals of this village paid their rents through a Manjhi, but some Poddars very many years ago managed to get a settlement of the village from the Raja of Khatra These Poddars are *mahajans*, and they have got a large portion of the cultivation of the village in their own hand now. They produced a certain number of deeds executed by the Sonthals in their favour, but there are probably others.

The following are the details of the deeds :—

Raiyat	Land sold	Price	Mahajans.	Date.	Remarks.
		Rs. A.			
Doman ...	7 bighas	32 0	Banu Poddar	1892	C C sale for debts.
Sarma ..	2 "	10 0	Ditto	1893	Private sale.
Kepa .	4 "	99 0	Jiban Poddar	1893	
Jherka ...	3 "	180 0	Doman Poddar	1897	
	2 "	99 0	Banu Poddar	1907	
	and 10 cottahs (homestead)				Re-settled on a rental of 8 maunds rated at Rs. 16 and annas 12
Matla	1¼ bighas	35 4 (=32 maunds)	Ditto	1899	Private sale.
Doman (chhota)	4 "	55 5	Nandu Poddar	1899	
Tusu ...	4 "	49 0	Ditto	1900	
Toro ...	25 "	100 0	Jiban Poddar	1900	

Since 1892, 53 bighas have gone into the hands of these particular *mahajan*-zamindars on account of the debts of the Sonthals The total amount of cultivation is 5 reks, which in this village is about 100 bighas or so, so that, within the last twenty-seven years about half of the cultivation of the village has gone into the hands of the zamindar-*mahajans* ; some of this has been given back on high produce rents The best land has gone. The Poddars increased the rents many years ago The following list of rents payable to Jiban Poddar shows that cess is paid at an extraordinary high rate :—

	Rs. A	Cess. As.
Chand Rai Manjhi	2 8	6
Phola "	3 0	3
Amar "	3 0	6
Masang "	2 4	6
Hopna "	2 8	6
Chota Karo "	3 8	0
Homestead land	0 6	12

The excuse given for charging such high rates is that they have to realize it to pay their own cess *Bethbegari*—one day's ploughing has to be given to both the *mahajan*-proprietors and to the Khatra Raj.

The following is a statement showing the present amount of land and the indebtedness of the Sonthals in the village as ascertained from the Sonthals.

The statement shows that they are in a fair way to losing their lands to the *mahajan*-proprietors :—

Raiyat.	Present amount of land	Debts.			Remarks.
		Unsecured	Secured.	Security	
Doman ...	2 puras of *bad* land remaining	......	Rs. 21 (1907)	Bond	Borrowed in a case 25 per cent (Banu Poddar)
	... .	10 maunds (1906).	......	.	50 per cent. interest repaid (Jiban Poddar).
	.. ....	......	3 maunds (1907).	A cow	Ditto (Raghu Mahli).
Masang ...	1/5 rek (none lost) and some *sajha*	... ..	......	...	No debts.
Sarma ...	All lost ..	.....	......	...	Only cultivates *adhi*. Has no debts
Bhagrai ...	Unknown ...	8 maunds...	......	. .	50 per cent. (Salish Poddar).
	. ...	......	Rs. 80 (1907)	*Kist-bandi*	Rs 10 a year for 8 years, interest paid (Jiban Poddar)
Hopna ...	Unknown ...	50 maunds	......	...	Account just made up (Jiban Poddar).
	...	Rs 40 (1908)	... ..	...	25 per cent (Jiban Poddar)
	... ...	......	Rs. 10 ...	Bond	Interest paid originally 25 per cent.
Luda ...	All lost	...	... ..	...	Has no debts
Moral ...	All lost, except homestead land	.. ..	. .	...	Ditto
Chipa ...	1/3 rek ..	... ..	Rs 20-8 (1907).	Bond	Interest re-paid (Keswar Poddar)
	......	. . .	Rs. 20 (1908)	Do	25 per cent (Keswar Poddar)
	... ..	11 maunds	......	...	Accounts just made up (Banu Poddar).
	....	9 ,,	......	...	50 per cent (Nandu Poddar)
	...	... .	10 maunds (1906).	Bond	Interest re-paid.
	... .	20 maunds	... ..	...	Some re-paid.
	.. ..	Rs 10 (1908)	.. ..	...	For Lac.
Tura ..	All lost ...	......	......	...	Now a servant of *mahajan*-proprietor Has no debts.
Doman ...	Do ...	. ...	... ..	. .	Has no debts
Ruia ...	1/5 rek .	.. .	Rs 30 ...	Bond	Talu Poddar.
Buga ..	1/5 ,, ...	Rs 16 (1906)	......	...	25 per cent. Interest of 1907 only re-paid (Banu Poddar).
	... .	......	13 maunds (1907)	Bond	10 maunds re-paid.
	...	. .	5 maunds (1907)	Do	Interest re-paid.
Jerhia ...	4 puras left, also some bighas.	Rs. 20 ...	......	...	25 per cent. (Banu Poddar)
	... .. .	4 maunds (1907)	......	...	Account made up in 1907, 50 per cent (Banu Poddar)
Matla ..	3 puras ...	Rs 6 ...	......	...	25 per cent. (Bibhu Poddar).
Goya ...	Unknown ...	... .	......	...	No debts now since sale of land.
Dulu ..	....	......	... ..	...	Unknown.

IX.—Baranguria Broken.—This village was sold up for debts incurred by the Manjhi to some *mahajans* just after the great famine of 1865-66. The latter subsequently obtained a *dar-mukurari* of the village. The rate of rent was then Rs 3 a rek, the *mahajan* proceeded to raise this to Rs 7. They lend money to the raiyats and then sell up their lands, giving them back again on the original rent *plus* a *sajha* rent. The result is that about half the cultivation of the village has been sold to the *mahajans*, but one-third has been given back on large produce rents. Two statements are given below, showing approximately the state of dispossession and of indebtedness of the raiyats. A perusal of the details will show that Bhadoli is about to lose his land on account of a mortgage, and that most of the others are in a fair way to do so eventually. They have to give *bethbegari* both to the *mahajan*-proprietors and to the overlord, a zamindar of Khatra. The Khatra Raj also collect *magan* on the occasion of any festival, As 12, Re 1, or Rs 2 a village. But the Sonthals do not object to this. They pity and like the Khatra Raja, because he has lost his lands. The *mahajans* get vegetables free. Receipts are not as a rule granted:—

INDEBTEDNESS

No	Unsecured	Secured	Security	Amount re-paid	Interest	Remarks
1	...	6 maunds (1907)	Bond	Interest	50 per cent	
2	..	10 „ 10 seers (1907)	Do	Ditto	50 „	For three years
	Rs. 5 (1906)	..	..	Ditto	25 „	
	1 seer of rice	..	..	...	100 „	
3	...	Rs. 50 (about 1899) and due Rs 400	All his land	...	25 „	Simple mortgage (case going on)
	...	25 maunds (about 1898)	2 reks	.	50 „	
	.	20 maunds (1908)	Bond	...	50 „	
	Rs. 3 (1907)	..	..		25 „	
4	...	5 puras of grain (about 1900)	All his land	......	35 „	Simple mortgage, *satasi* interest
	Rs. 7 „	.	..	...	25 „	
5	.	Rs 12-8 and 8 maunds grain (1908)	Bond	...	25 „	
					35 „	
6	1 bandi ...	...		...	50 „	
7	......	30 maunds (1907)	*Kistbandi*	20 maunds	......	10 maunds a year, 3 years *kists* repaid.
	..	12 „ (1906)	Bond	...	50 „	
	...	Rs. 25 (1907)	...	...	2[illegible] „	
	Rs. 6	...		...	2[illegible] „	To be repaid in *Bysak* for lac
8	...	2 maunds (1907)	Bond	1 maund	[illegible] „	
	Rs 8 (1907)	..	..	...	25 „	
9	...	14 maunds (1907)	Bond	8 maunds (1908)	35 „	
	Rs 9 (1907)	...	..	..	25 „	
10	...	10 maunds (1908)	Bond	9 maunds	35 „	
	Rs 9 (1907)	...		......	25 „	
	„ 6 „	......	...	...	25 „	For lac.
11	.	4 maunds (about 1900)	All land	Some	35 „	Simple mortgage.
	...	4 maunds (about 1901)	Bond	Do.	50 „	
12	Rs 5	12 maunds (1906)	..	Do	50 „	Simple mortgage.
	......	Ditto	Bond	Interest	50 „	
	......	......	...	...	25 „	

No.	Original land	Land lost.	Land given back.	Original rent.	Present rent	REMARKS.
				Rs A	Rs. A	
1	2 reks	All	1 rek	7 0	7 0 and 2 puras grain (20 maunds)	Land lost with whole village, settlement of area made at Rs 7; this again sold to *mahajan*-proprietors who gave a fresh settlement at increased rent
2	1 rek	½ rek	.	3 8	1 12 (no receipt)	Civil Court sale for debts five years ago to Kartik *Mahti*
3	3 reks	1½ reks	...	7 0 (no receipt)	7 0 ditto	Usufructuary mortgage to Kartik Mahti, pending payment of principal amount, Rs 150
4	2 "	1 rek	...	7 0 (no receipt)	7 0 ditto	Unknown how Kartik Mahti obtained the land
5	1½ "	1½ reks	1½ reks	5 4	5 4 and 6 bandis grain	Sold for debts three years ago to Raghu Mahti, the *sajha* is paid to Ragu Mahti, and the money rent to Kartik Mahti
6	1½ "	1½ reks	1½ "	5 4	5 4 and 4 bandis	Sold for debts on account of famine 1896, fresh settlement made at *sajha* rental by Gaya Sunri
7	1 rek	1 rek	1 rek	3 8	7 8	Once sold up for arrears of rent, but re-settled at higher rental This portion of village belongs to Khatra Raj
8 9	½ "	2 bandis		1 12	1 12	The land lost is cultivated *bhagti* Sold for debts 12 years ago to Baikanto Sahu
10	½ "	2 "	...	1 12	1 12	Sold for debts six years ago, cultivated *bhagti* by Sonthal to Baikunto Sahu.
11	1 "	½ rek	..	7 0	3 8	Sold for debts to Kartik Mahti 12 years ago.
12	1 "		.	3 8		There is a dispute regarding this in the Court.
Total	15 reks	7½+4 bandis	5 reks	...	... ...	One bandi equals 1 pura, or equals 10 maunds

X—*Tilabad Intact*—The Sonthals came from Santbhum, in Chhatna, about 100 years ago They all pay rent through the Manjhi who gets a joint receipt in the name of three persons, the descendants of the original two persons with whom the land was settled The rent of the village is Rs 24-11-1, one-fourth of which is jungle No *bethbegari* is given About one-half of the village is cultivated by *mahajans* The following statement shows the rate of mutation and the present state of indebtedness in the village. It is noticeable that the *mahajans*, when they have acquired the land, re-settle portions of it on large *sajha*

or produce rents, the rate is 8 maunds a bigha for good rice land. There is no *Joy-Paranick* in this village or in any village in his neighbourhood. There is no Kudam-Naiki.

NAMES.	Land	Land lost.	REMARKS.	DEBTS. Unsecured	Secured	Security	REMARKS.
Phulari Manjhi, and his son Moroi	2 reks .	1 rek (about 20 bighas)	Sold in three transactions from 12 to 20 years ago. Some of the land is cultivated by the *mahajans* themselves, some land given back on *sajha* settlement of 30½ maunds.	— 16 maunds (1908)	5 puras ... Rs 73.	1½ bigha (1907) Bond 1906	*Saoni* interest 26 per cent. (pura 10 maunds); simple mortgage 16 years. Interest 3 annas in the rupee
Bosla	1 rek ...	½ a rek (8 or 9 bighas)	Sold to *mahajan* in a number of transactions extending down to 5 years ago. 2½ bighas given back *bhagli* and the rest given back at *sajha* rental of 41 maunds, 16 seers at the rate 8 maunds per bigha. Also cultivates some other land *sajha* at a rental of 24 maunds.	Rs 10 (1908) 8 maunds	— — Rs. 100 ...	- — —	Now due 25 per cent interest (these are at 25 per cent for the cultivation of lac) *Kistbandi* for Rs 5 a year for 20 years 7 years ago, only 2 *kists* re-paid.
Kudu	1 rek ...	½ rek .	Sold to *mahajans* in different transactions 12 to 20 years ago	—	4 puras Rs 108 4 puras 1901	All his land. Simple bond	Single mortgage 10 years ago. Interest 25 per cent. paid regularly None re-paid 25 per cent
Dhodo	1 rek	5 bighas	Sold to *mahajans* for 8 to 20 years ago. 16 cottahs given back on a rental of 4 maunds	—	35 maunds (1908) 5 puras (1907)	Simple bond One field.	None re paid 50 per cent 50 per cent interest.
Nonka ...	1 rek ...	½ reks	Sold to *mahajans* for 10 to 20 years ago, some given back on a *sajha* rental of 20 maunds.	—	20 maunds Rs. 40	Bond *kist bandi*.	25 per cent (1907) Rs 4 a year for 10 years 8 years ago. *Kists* not paid regularly
Luku ...	1 rek ...	Unknown	Sold — — — .		40 maunds Rs. 20	*Kistbandi* Simple bond	5 maunds a year 8 years ago. None re-paid,
Barduhi Manjhi			—				
Pandu	1 rek ...	1 rek ...	Lost many years ago left the village				
Anu ...	1 rek	1 rek ...	Sold to a *mahajan* 20 years ago, left the village.	—			

XI.—Itiamara. Broken.—This village was cleared by Sonthals who came from the large parent village of Ranglbari, east of Khatra. They have never to their recollection paid rent through a Manjhi to the different owners, the majority of whom are *mahajans*. No receipts are given, except in one instance, on the ground that the raiyats have got no proper settlement, but only a *mukjabani* or verbal settlement. According to the villagers the rate of rent is Re. 1 a rek, from the verbal statement of one of the owners, it would appear that he contended the rent was more than this, but he could produce no list of tenants. A very rough statement of the 11 houses in the village who cultivate is given below. A number of the villagers are very much involved, and those who have not paid up the interest due on their mortgages or the *kists* of the *kistbandis* are bound to lose their lands. The raiyats have to give *bethbegari*, one day's ploughing, one day's digging, one day's cutting, and one day's threshing to the proprietors. They have to give one pound (20 gundas) of *janha* from each household, and to subscribe for (*mangan*) for the funeral expenses of the proprietors

NAME	Amount of land now held	Land lost	REMARKS.	DEBTS Unsecured	Secured	Security	REMARKS.
Bobita .	2 reks ...	Unknown. Now only cultivate *d ugat* and *bhagti* land	Sales to *mahajan*	Rs 110 (1908)	40 mds	50 bighas	Simple mortgage 1908. Interest *derha* 50 per cent.
Tipu ...	4 „ ...			—	110 mds	1 bandh	*Kistbandi* for 1305-1315 10 maunds a year. Not repaid regularly
Singhai ...	2½ „	—	—				No debts
Kepa Manjhi	1 rek	—	—	6mds (1907) 3mds. (1905)	Rs 140	Land	*Kistbandi* of 9 maunds a year from about 1900. *Kists* repaid regularly. 16 maunds of total debts repaid this year
Gria .	2 reks	— —			46 mds	2 reks 50 bighas	Simple mortgage. Interest paid regularly 1900. 50 per cent
Harna „	4 bighas	3 bighas	Sale for Rs. 190 (1908)	30mds (1907) Rs 110			0 maunds repaid *derhea* sect.
Lakhan „	3 reks	2 reks	Sold to a *mahajan* who has given it back on the original rent Rs 2 *plus* 8 annas and 12 maunds *sajha*	Rs 12 (1907)			Rs 12 repaid, but not interest
Kulu „ ...	2 reks ...	— —	—		Unknown	2 reks	Simple mortgage about 1900, Interest not paid 50 per cent
Pandu „ .	4 bighas		-	3mds (1908)		—	*Derhia*, 1 maund still due
Ram „	2 reks ...		—	—			Not present
Kalia „	3 reks	—	—		120 mds	Land ...	*Kistbandi* for 10 maunds a year from 1315 to 1324.

XII.—Sagedih Broken.—A small and broken village. The present headman is the son of the original clearer of the soil. The money-lenders have got the lands of five of them, and temporarily re-settled

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin.

them with the original owners, who have turned under-raiyats under the former. The total rents of these Sonthals have thus been increased from Rs. 14 to Rs. 18 *plus* 26 maunds of paddy, equivalent to about Rs 70 altogether

XIII.—Kalikhanna Broken.—Some of the descendants of the original clearer of the soil are still Mandals of the village for one-third share, their co-sharers having sold their shares to the money-lenders The present headman is the grandson of the original clearer of the soil

XIV—Khandarani Broken.—The present headman is the grandson of the original clearer of the soil.

XV.—Mokutmonipur Intact —

	Rs	A.	
Rent ...	9	10	in 1883 for the whole village.
Present „ ...	36	0	for the same area

The original clearer of the soil is still living There are altogether six Sonthal raiyats in the village, including the headman, each paying an equal share of rent The tenure-holders are also the money-lenders of the village, to whom the raiyati lands have been sold in repayment of debts

XVI.—Chillagarh Broken—The present headman is the grandson of the original clearer of the soil. About half of the lands of this village has been sold in repayment of debts to the tenure-holder, who is also the money-lender. He has retained the best lands and re-settled the worst lands with the original owners at rates of rent, the total rents having been increased for Rs 37 to what is equivalent to Rs. 250

XVII—Jhhapandih Broken —

	Rs	A.	
Past rent ...	29	4	
Present „ ...	29	4	and 48 maunds of paddy (*sajha*) for the same area.

The present headman is the original clearer of the soil. The Sonthals transferred all their lands to a money-lender in repayment of debts incurred in civil suits The latter has allowed them to hold the lands under him as under-raiyats on enhanced rent

No XII (above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts — Unsecured	Debts — Secured	Debts — Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
1	7	7	Sold to money-lender for debts who temporarily resettled the land	—	—		
2	7	7	Ditto ditto	—			
3	8	8	Ditto ditto	—	—		
4	6	6	Ditto ditto.		—		
5	7	2 5	Ditto ditto Purchased in auction by money lender or for debts who temporarily resettled the land	— —	—	—	
6	4	—	—	Rs 16-8 and 11 maunds of paddy	— — —		Interest 25 per cent Do 50 ditto

No. XIII (above)

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts — Unsecured	Debts — Secured	Debts — Security	Remarks
1, 2, 3, 4	6	16	Sold to money lenders for debts, one of whom resettled 8 bighas.	Rs. 65 —	Rs. 32 —	All lands in possession	Interest 25 per cent Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken 4 years ago None repai
5	20	18	Sold to money lender for debts		—		Interest 25 per cent
6	15				—	—	
7		[illegible]	Sold to money lender for debts			—	
8	15	15	Sold to money lender for debts resettled the land at a rent of 1[illegible] maunds (Valued at Rs. 38)	40 maunds of paddy.	—		Interest 25 per cent
9	15						
10, 11	30	30	Sold in auction for debts	Rs 20	60 maunds	All lands in possession	Interest 25 per cent Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent Repaid 40 maunds still due 40 maunds.
12	20			—	—		
13	—	12	Private sale for consideration newly cleared	— —			
14	8			—		—	
15	8	8	Sold to money lender for debts who temporarily resettled it	—	—	— —	

No. XIV (above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts — Unsecured	Debts — Secured	Debts — Security	Remarks
1	10	12	Sold in auction for arrears of rent.	— —	Rs 275 —	All land in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 18 75 per cent. Amount of loan due
		4	Sold to money lenders for debts		Rs. 475	Ditto	Ditto ditto.
2	6			—		—	
3	4		— —	—	—	—	
4	—						
5	4				—	—	
6	8			—	—	—	
7	—	9	Sold in auction for arrears of rent.	— —	—	—	
8	6	—	—	—		—	

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
9		9	Sold in action for arrears of rent				
10	113			Rs 40 and 20 maunds of paddy	Rs 80 and 20 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent Amount of loan taken a year ago not re paid Simple mortgage Interest 50 per cent Amount of loan taken a year ago not re paid
11	8		—	29 maunds of paddy		Ditto	Interest *derhia* or 50 per cent
12	38						
13	10	5	Sold to money lender for debts	27 maunds of paddy	40 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 50 per cent Amount of loan taken two years ago Repaid 10 maunds Interest 35 per cent
14	12		—	Rs 19 6 and 10 maunds of paddy			Interest 25 per cent
							Interest 50 per cent
15	10	2	—			—	
16	4		—				
17	6						
18	0	14	Surrenders *jote* for arrears of rent, but 6 bighas re settled				
19		4½	Sold to money lender for debts			—	
20		4½					
21	4	—		40 maunds of paddy	—		Interest 50 per cent

No XV (above)

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
1	7		—		Rs 140	Headman's interest.	Simple mortgage Interest 15 625 per cent Amount of loan taken three years ago Re paid interest for the 1st year
					95 maunds of paddy	Ditto	Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent Amount of loan due
2	5	2½	Sold to money lender for debts	28 maunds of paddy	Rs 160	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 18 75 per cent Amount of loan taken two years ago R paid only Rs 11 4 Still due Rs 82 8
3	1	6	Ditto				Interest 25 per cent
4	5½	2½	Ditto	10 maunds of paddy		—	Ditto
5	1	6	Ditto				
6	7	—		—	Rs 40 and 30 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Interest 18 75 per cent for the money and 25 per cent for the paddy loan Due Rs 85 and 75 maunds of paddy None re paid

No XVI (above)

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
1	5	9	Sold to money lender for debts Two bighas under usufructuary mortgage		50 maunds of paddy 10 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession 2 bighas	Simple mortgage Interest 25 per cent Amount of loan due Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
2			Sold to money lender for debts who resettled the land			—	
3	5	6					
4			Purchased in auction by money lender for debts	—			
5		6					
6	—		Purchased in auction for debts by money lender who re settled the land that has again been given as usufructuary mortgage	—	Rs 300	15 bighas —	Usufructuary mortgage
7	20	15					
8	10		—	60 maunds of paddy		—	Interest 50 per cent.
9			—				
10	20						
11			Purchased in auction by money-lender for debts who re-settled 2 bighas Three bighas under usufructuary mortgage	—	60 maunds of paddy	3 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
12	5	20			—	—	
13						—	
14	10	15	Sold for debts to money lender for debts who resettled 10 bighas	Rs 200 —	—	—	Repayable by an instalment of Rs 20 per year
15	6	6	Sold to money-lender for debts.	60 maunds of paddy.			Repayable by an instalment of 10 maunds per year
16	10		—			—	
17	12	5	Sold to money lender for debts Two bighas under usufructuary mortgage		140 maunds of paddy	2 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
18	15	20	Sold but got re settled 15 bighas	54 maunds of paddy		—	Repayable by an instalment of 6 maunds per year
19	10	10	Sold but re settled			—	
20	6	—	Newly settled by tenure-holder			—	
21	3		Ditto ditto		—	—	
22	3		Ditto ditto		—	—	
23	4	4	Sold but re-settled			—	
24	4		Newly settled by tenure-holder			—	
25					—		
26	5		Newly settled by tenure holder			—	
27	5		Ditto ditto			—	
[illegible]	3		Ditto ditto	—	—	—	
[illegible]	20		Ditto ditto	—	—	—	

No. XVII.—(Above)

Serial No.	Amount of land held	Amount of land lost, but resettled	Original rent	Present rent
	Bighas.	Bighas	Rs A	Rs A
1	12	12	2 4	2 4+9 salis 7 seers
2	8	8	2 4	2 4+3 ,, 11 ,,
3	12	12	2 4	2 4+2 maunds 16 ,,
4	9	9	2 4	2 4+1 ,, 32 ,,
5	9	9	2 4	2 4+2 ,, 38 ,,
6	12	12	2 4	2 4+6 ,, 26 ,,
7	16	16	2 4	2 4+6 ,,
8 } 9 }	9	9	2 4	2 4+3 ,, 3 seers
10	10	10	2 4	2 4+3 ,, 3 ,,
11	10	10	2 4	
12 13	10	10	2 4	2 4+3 ,, 23 ,,
14	12	12	2 4	2 4+2 ,, 33 ,,
15	10	10	2 4	2 4+2 ,, 37 ,,
				2 4+4 ,, 4 ,,
				(2 salis = 1 maund)

KHATRA THANA

Other Tribes

BHUMIJIS

XVIII—Ramband Broken—The Bhumijes have been living in this village for three generations. The descendants of the original clearers of the soil are still Mandals of this village for 7 annas share, their co-sharers having sold off their shares to others.

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin

No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas.					
1	16	10	Sold to money lender for debts		Rs 120 and 130 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan taken a year ago. Interest 12.5 per cent for money and 25 per cent for paddy loan. Now due Rs 135 and 62½ maunds
2	30	--			Rs 700	One anna Mandali share of the village	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Interest 12.5 per cent
3	8	12	Sold to money lender for debts who re-settled temporarily 3 bighas at the original rent Rs 2 13 of the whole	Rs. 58			Interest 25 per cent
4	11			--	Rs 304 and 208 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Interest 12.5 per cent for money and 25 per cent for paddy loan
5	10	18	Sold to money lender for debts, who temporarily re-settled 10 bighas at a rent of Rs 12 and 10 maunds of the paddy (valued at Rs 20), the original rent of the whole was Rs 4-8				
6	3	10	Sold to money lender for debts, who temporarily re-settled 3 bighas at the original rent of the whole	--		--	
7		15	Sold to money lender for debts.			--	
8		10	Sold for debts		--		
9	--	5	Sold to money lender for debts.			--	

Bhuiyans

XIX.—Rajasol Broken.—The Bhuiyans were originally Mandals of this village. They have sold this interest to others. They have been living here for three generations.

Serial No	Amount of land held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas,					
1	15	20	Sold to money lender for debts who re-settled 15 bighas *bhaoli*		50 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Interest 25 per cent
		10	Sold for debts				
2, 3		10	Sold to money lender for debts				
4, 5, 6	1	5	Purchased in auction by the tenure holder for arrears of rent				
7		6	Arbitrary eviction by tenure holder				
8					Rs 33 and 100 mds of paddy	Ditto	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan taken. Interest of 25 per cent for money and 50 per cent for paddy loan. Repaid Rs 40. Still due Rs. 33 and 25 maunds of paddy.
9	5		Now settled				

Bauris

XX.—Baum Broken.—The Bauris have been living in this village for five generations.

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
1, 2		10	Sold to money lender for debts				
3, 4	6	4	Ditto ditto		20 maunds of paddy	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Interest 50 per cent
5	10				100 mds of paddy	Ditto	Ditto ditto
6	6	4	Sold to money lender for debts	Rs 60 and 0 maunds of paddy	84 maunds of paddy	Ditto	Interest 25 per cent. Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Repayable by an instalment of 6 maunds per year
7	5	5	Ditto ditto		50 maunds of paddy	Ditto	Simple mortgage. Amount of loan due. Interest 50 per cent
8, 9	10						

Kodas

XXI.—Kumarbahal Broken.—

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
1			Sold to money lenders for debts one of whom re-settled 6 bighas at a rental of 20 maunds (valued at Rs 40) the original rent of which land being Rs 6	20 maunds of paddy			Interest 50 per cent
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	6	15		—			
8, 9	3	10	Sold to money lender for debts	00 maunds of paddy			Interest 50 per cent
10, 11	2	6	Sold to money lender for debts	20 maunds o paddy			Interest 50 per cent.
12	4	4	Ditto ditto				

Deshwali or Hinduised Sonthals.

XXII—Akkhuta Broken—A large village The Deshwalis have been living here for four generations

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts, Unsecured	Debts, Secured	Debts, Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas					
1					Rs 26	1¼ bigha	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken. Interest 25 per cent Partly repaid Now due Rs [illegible] Interest 20 per cent
2, 3, 4, 5	25			[illegible] maunds of paddy			Interest 25 per cent
6, 7		5	Sold to money lender for debts	-		-	
8		4	Ditto ditto				
9		4	Ditto ditto				
10	1	4	Sold to money lender for debts who temporarily settled 1 bigha				
11	12						
12	15	25	Sold to money lender for debts	47 maunds of paddy	-		
		40	Sold jointly with his co-sharers to money lenders for debts				Interest 25 per cent.
		10	Given mukurari as a sub lease	Rs 30			Ditto
13	12			18 maunds of paddy	-		Ditto
14	12	18	Sold to money lender for debts one of whom temporarily resettled 12 bighas				
15	14	-					
16			Sold to money lender for debts	42 maunds of paddy	Rs 35	All lands in possession	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken three year ago Interest 12½ per cent All interest paid
					40 maunds of paddy	Ditto	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken a year ago Interest paid Rate per cent Interest [illegible] per cent
17					110 maunds of paddy	6 bighas	Simple mortgage Amount of loan due Interest 25 per cent
18	16	12	Sold to money lenders for debts	16 maunds of paddy	100 maunds of paddy	-	Simple mortgage Amount of loan due Interest 25 per cent
19							Interest 25 per cent
20				Rs 67-8			Do 25
21	14						
22	16						
23	7	4	Sold to money lender for debts		60 maunds of paddy	5 bighas	Simple mortgage Amount of loan due Interest 25 per cent
				41½ maunds of paddy			Interest 25 per cent
24				Rs 75			Ditto
	4	6	Sold to money lender for debts	16 maunds of paddy	40 maunds paddy	5 bighas	Ditto
25	4	6	Sold to money lender for debts				Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken Interest 25 per cent Repaid 20 maunds Still due 100 maunds
26		8 2	Ditto ditto Purchased in auction by tenure holders for arrears of rent	-	-		

RAIPUR THANA

XXIII—Mauza Rajahatu Broken (*120 houses of Sonthals and Bhumijes*)—The village was originally cleared by the Sonthals, who, in the ordinary course, first came and surveyed the land and then searched for its owner This turned out to be the Raja of Shyamsundapur, who gave them a *patta* There were then two Manjhis, Chand Rai and Kuar, through whom the rent was paid The Raja subsequently made over the village to Gopal Gossain as *brahmottar*, but the latter made over a *mukurari* of most of it to a Sunri named Tara Chand Chaudhuri for a consideration of Rs 1,000, which was confirmed by the Raja at a rental of Rs 101-8 This happened in 1880 It did not dispose of the Manjhi's right, for it was not till 1890 that the representatives of Kuar Manjhi, one of the original Manjhis, sold what purported to be their half of the village to the Sunri apparently for debts valued at Rs. 1,499 The representatives of the other original Manjhi, Chand Rai, have managed to keep their lands out of this particular money-lender's hands, 250 bighas on a rental of Rs 5 which he has coveted, even up to the High Court to increase the rent, but without success But this has not prevented the land going into the hands of other *mahajans*. Receipts are not granted

There are four *tolas*, three of which are purely Sonthal, *viz*, Kariarsye Bangotu and Chiklagotu, so far as inhabitants are concerned ; the fourth, Jasudih, is half, and the fifth, Rajapat purely Dikku The *mahajan* zamindars are Ram Sadai and Kunja Chaudhuri.—

(a) Tola Kariarsye.

Bolai Manjhi.—Bolai is the son of Panru, one of the executants of the sale of half the village Subsequent to the sale (1890) Panru and Chuna Ram, other executants, took a fresh lease of about 30 bighas for Rs. 18 The third executant Rajda appears to have surrendered his share, and to have left the village Panru's descendants and Chuna Ram now cultivate 25 bighas on a rental of Rs 16 The share of their rent had before 1890 been Rs 6 Bolai pays 3 maunds a year on a *kistbandi* to the *mahajan*-proprietor, executed 8 years ago for a period of ten years.

Chuna Ram Manjhi.—This is the executant referred to above In 1908 he sold his share in the land he received back to one of the *mahajan*-zamindars for debts valued at Rs 500, but has received a fresh lease of the same for 5 aras, *i e.*, about 20 maunds of grain per annum He owes 8 aras at 25 per cent

Jagai Manjhi.—After the *mahajan*-zamindar got possession of the village, he sought to raise the rent There was a case which Jagai Manjhi fought, but finally compromised, so that the rent was raised from Rs 7 to Rs 25 But he had to sell his lands to a Tanti to defray the expenses of the case He took a fresh *mukurari* lease of some 12 bighas from the Tanti for Rs 6-4 a year, but subsequently sold this again and got back a *mukurari* of some land for Rs 3 Originally he appears to have had 77 bighas, and now has about 3 bighas, initially lost, because the zamindar strove to raise his rent He says he has no debts

Bardol Manjhi.—He has a fourth share of the 250 bighas for which Rs 5 is paid But he has recently had cases with the *mahajan*-zamindar and in one Court won the case, and actually sold the latter up, but there was an appeal in which the decision was given against the Sonthal To defray the expenses of this case, Bardol Manjhi sold his share 70 bighas 10 cottahs to one Shyama Charun Bid, who gave back a *mukurari* lease of the land for 72 maunds of grain a year, that is to say if a maund be taken to be valued at Rs 2, Bardol's rent was increased from Re 1-4 to Rs 144 a year He owes 2¼ aras at 25 per cent, and executed a *kistbandi* of Rs 4 for 10 years the year before last

Raghu, Bajan, Badu, Lodha and Matta Manjhi.—These are the owners of the other three-fourth share of the 250 bighas, for which Rs 5 rent is paid Eight annas of the whole land was sold to one Sanjal Haldar, who gave back a *mukurari* of the land on a rental of Rs 20 Subsequently Raghu Manjhi's share of this *mukurari* was again sold to Sanjal Haldar to prevent a Civil Court sale, but he received a fresh *mukurari* lease of his share for 20 maunds of grain a year They have only small debts, except a *kistbandi* of 6 maunds a year for 12 years and bond for about 12 aras.

Tola Jaldih.

Rupia Manjhi.—His rent has recently been increased from Rs 4-12 to Rs 5 In or about 1904 he sold his land to the *mahajan*-zamindar who gave him a fresh lease of it on a rental of 8 maunds *sajha*. Owes 8 maunds at 50 per cent

Jogan Manjhi has lost no land, and pays Rs 4 rent

Kala Manjhi is unable to give details regarding his land His rent is Rs 3-8

Jolha, Kana, Ragda and Sham Manjhi have got 30 bighas of land, for which they pay rent of Rs 10 Jolha's fourth share was sold for his debts three years ago Ragda sold half his lands for debts four or six years ago, but got it back on a *sajha* rent of 4 maunds Sham Manjhi has disposed of about half of his share by private sale to the *mahajan* for his debts Over 20 years ago some of his land was transferred to the zamindar by way of usufructuary mortgage

Buhal Manjhi has 13 bighas of land at a rental of Rs. 6-12 One bandh of land was given to the *mahajan* for his brother's debts amounting to Rs 80

Rahim Manjhi was dispossessed of his *goraiti man* land by the zamindar three years ago, the zamindar, apparently resumed it as service land Rahim had no other land, and now cultivates some other land *sajha* and *adhi*

Tola Barigotu

Ganga Charan Manjhi has lost no land, and his rent is unchanged—Rs. 19

Tara, Pudu, Moral Harma, Jata, and Saroda Manjhis originally had some 80 bighas of land, at a rental of Rs 5-2 According to the Malik's *jamabandi* this is now 124 bighas Tara and Moral are still in possession of their shares, 28 bighas at Re 1-2-4 rent. Tara has executed a *kistbandi* for 90 maunds, at 10 maunds for 9 years, 7 years ago. Amounts have been regularly repaid Pudu has sold his share, about 14 bighas, to the zamindar-*mahajan*. Harma's land has been sold up in the Civil Court debts to the zamindar-*mahajan*, but he has received a fresh *bandobust* of the same land, 42 bighas, at Rs. 16 a year. Saroda's share has also been sold up in the Civil Court for debts also to the zamindar—a new *bandobust*

was taken for 42 bighas at Rs 16 a year, but a fourth of this was also again sold to the zamindar-*mahajan*, and the rent has been decreased to Rs 12 Saroda has also given a usufructuary mortgage of 8 bighas to one Dino Mandal for five years for the interest on Rs 66 He gave last year a simple bond for Rs. 12, and 6½ aras of grain of which Rs 7 is said to be due

Manjhi and Kala Manjhi cultivate 14 bighas on a rental of Rs 8 Manjhi has lost one bigha to the zamindar-*mahajan* for Rs 10 debts The rent was 12 years ago Rs. 7 He has given a *kistbandi* of six maunds a year to the *mahajan*-proprietor

Haru, Salku, Hukri and Kasail Manjhi originally held 25 bighas on a rental of Rs 15. Haru and Kasail Manjhi lost their land by a Civil Court sale for debts to the *mahajan*-zamindar 9 or 10 years ago, and have received a *bandobust* of 17 bighas, principally Dhangar land, at Rs 6. Salku and Hukri hold what is still called 25 bighas in the Malik's *jamabandi* on a rental of Rs 12 He pays 4 annas for homestead land Salku gave a *kistbandi* to the *mahajan*-proprietor for 1 ara a year last year Kala Turka's land was sold up in the Civil Court about 30 years ago. He now possesses about a bigha of homestead land, for which 4 annas is paid

Suban has lost all his land, sold up for debts by the *mahajan*-zamindar, but has received a fresh *bandobust* at Rs 6

Chuna has lost his land, sold it two years ago for debts to the *mahajan*-zamindar His rent was originally Re 1-8, but he has got a fresh *bandobust* for Rs 3 and 10 maunds *sajha* He has given a usufructuary mortgage of some land for a small debt to two Sonthals

Matla Manjhi lost all his land; selling it for debts many years ago, and cultivates no land now' His rent was Rs 5.

In addition to the above, it appears from the zamindar's statement that, since 1895, Jadu, Bura Darma Manjhi and Chota Darma Manjhi left the village, and surrendered their land on account of the debts due to the *mahajan*-zamindar Muchram Manjhi and Ram Rai Manjhi have also surrendered their land, the former because the land was too bad to bear the amount of rent assessed by the *mahajan*-zamindar, a fact admitted by the latter, but not in so many words The rent was Re 1-4 for 6 bighas of Dhangar land

The original rent of the Sonthals in this village was Rs 101-8-0, now, according to the *jamabandi* of one *mahajan* zamindar they pay Rs 186-7-9, and, besides rent, they have to pay at a minimum computation 134 maunds *sajha* Calculating 134 maunds of *sajha* as being equal to Rs 268, the rent has been increased at a minimum computation to Rs 459, though this does not all go to the *mahajan*-zamindar, and much land has been lost by the Sonthals

The zamindar admits by his *jamabandi* to having secured 80 bighas in his own *khas* cultivation during the last 12 years, 329 bighas were in his *khas* possession in 1895, the total cultivation in his village is now 1,173 bighas But his previous *jamabandis*, coupled with his own state nents, show that 128 bighas of the Sonthals' land have been acquired by him on account of debts due to him (with a few minor exceptions already mentioned) since 1895

The Sonthals have to give *beth-begari*, half-a-day's ploughing—each person The whole village has to give Rs. 3 at a festival Fowls and vegetables have also to be given free of charge.

XXIV—Pindagadia quasi-Intact—This village is given as an example of a *quasi*-intact village, with an up-to-date Manjhi in it, who has avoided as yet the transfer of his right and who grants *pattas* and receipts The rent of the village is Rs 67-8 (road cess, Rs 4-10) There are three sharers who hold it on a *mukurari* lease The rents of the *parjas* are—

	Rs.	A
(1) Umacharan Gun for Dasmat Manjhi	4	0
(2) Ram Narayan Chhatri for Deb Manjhi	1	8
(3) Basra Manjhi	9	0
(4) Dabia Manjhi	1	4
(5) Basu Manjhi (from another village)	3	0
Dikku Parjas		
(6) Lupa Matho	20	0
(7) Ram Kurmi	6	0
(8) Sita Tamboli	6	0
(9) Lodia Kamkar	9	0
Total	62	12

The Manjhi Phagu says the sharers pay —

(10) Jitu	4	0
(11) Gun	2	0

This totals up to Rs 68-12, so he makes a profit of Re 1-4 *plus* his own cultivatione In his rent receipts he charges ½ anna in the rupee Road Cess and also ½ anna in the rupe,

Public Works Cess, the existence of which could not be verified, though it may exist. There was once a dispute between the Manjhi and his landlord in the Civil Court relating to this village. In the end the case was compromised, but the village had to be mortgaged for Rs 2,454-13 to a *mahajan* in order to pay what was agreed upon The arrangement is that 50 aras a year shall be paid for nine years to wipe off the debt Phagu, Jitu and Gur are all concerned in this mortgage Last year they would not pay the instalment due; other instalments since 1905 have been repaid

The other Dikku *parjas*, except the Kamkar, have been in the village since 5 or 6 years after the great famine of 1865-66

On one occasion the Manjhi actually measured the village and brought a case to increase the rent, but he failed He states he has *khem* or Manjhi rent-free land, but when his own land is to all intents and purposes rent-free, this is of not much account No one else has *khem* land

The following is an account of the other Sonthals in the village —

Dasmat Manjhi's land went after a mortgage to one Umacharun Gunn for his debts. His rent was Rs 4, he got 45½ bighas back in 1903 on a *jamajanay patta* at a rent of Rs 6 and 4½ aras grain He took a loan of 3 aras in 1907 secured by a simple bond, of which 1½ aras is still due at 50 per cent

Debu Manjhi's land went to Ram Narayan Chattri, who gave him a fresh settlement of it on a rental of Rs 5 in 1899 on a *jamai* settlement It was not disclosed how this happened

Ram Narayan only makes a profit of annas 8 a year out of the transaction Has no debts

Basra has a quarrel with the Manjhi, who has taken three bighas of his land into his own possession He owes a Sonthal in another village Rs 60 at 25 per cent interest, taken in 1907, out of which nothing has been repaid.

Delne Manjhi only cultivates *bhargi* or homestead land at a rental of Re. 1-4. He has no debts

Chanda Manjhi sold his land for his debts 9 years ago, and left the village. The Kankar cultivates it

Garbhu Manjhi sold his land many years ago, and left the village Lupa Mahto cultivates it

XXV—Ledhapakur Broken—The proprietor of this village is Ram Sadai Chaudhuri, the same *mahajan* who owes Rajahatu The Manjhi's father executed a sale of the village to him, but the others did not agree to one sale Subsequently the *mahajan* one night ploughed and sowed the land hither and thither. Next day he brought a case against the Sonthals for having ploughed and sown his land, and produced the seed in Court as proof thereof He won the case This is the Sonthal's reason—which was not believed by the Court. Consequently he got possession of the land of all the eight houses in the village, and made a fresh settlement with all the raiyats in 1898 by giving them *pattas*

Bearing in mind that the Sonthals have all lost their land, the following statement shows only the increases in rents in consequence.

The fact of the scarcity last year is again illustrated by the fact that the *kistbandis* were not paid then —

Name	Rent prior to 1898	Present rent	Debts. Unsecured	Debts. Secured.	Debts. Security	Remarks
	Rs A					
Gopia Manjhi	4 10	Rs 4, 2 aras	5 aras (now)	Rs 1,600 (1906) to R. S. Chaudhury	16 big.	Mortgage—*Kistbandi* of 10 maunds and Rs 4 per year for 19 years Repaid, except last year, 37½ per cent
Salku „	4 0	„ 8 1½ „		50 aras (1904) to R S Chaudhury	Bond	*Kistbandi* 5 maunds of grain a year for 40 years. Repaid regularly
Chuna „	4 0	„ 8, 1½ ,		13 aras (1904) to R S Chaudhury	Do	*Kistbandi* 1 ara a year for 13 years. Repaid regularly
Mohan „	4 0	„ 8, 1½ „ Now 14 maunds	2 aras	15 maunds (1906)	Do	50 per cent, 25 maunds now due 50 per cent.
San-u „	4 0	Rs 4 and 6 mds.		35 aras (1905) to R. S. Chaudhury. 8 aras (1905) to Bhairab Mandal	Do	*Kistbandi* 8 maunds a year for 18 years, 25 per cent 1 ara a year regularly repaid
				Rs 30 (1905) to Pona Manjhi	Bond	Rs 5 a year for 6 years Repaid regularly except last year 25 per cent,
Morala	3 0	Rs 7 4 aras				Absent
Total	*20 10 (rent of village)	Rs 31 and Rs 147—58 maunds				

* He sold his land again to the *mahajan* and received some of it back on a produce rent of 14 maunds.

XXVI—Ragnat Broken—The village is broken It consists of 24 houses, 16 of which cultivate Of 11 persons who appeared, one had lost the main portion of his land on account of debts, and two had been sold up for arrears of rent Three others had lost a bigha apiece on account of debts, and one of them now only cultivates *bhagti*. This land has gone into the hands of the rent-receivers, who are poor specimens of *mahajans*,

who would not admit that the Sonthals had made the village, who refused to produce their old *jamabandi* and documents, who at first tried to make out none of the Sonthals cultivated *sajha*, then admitted they did occasionally, and one of whom refused to admit that he was a *mahajan*, subsequently declaring that he had been once, but all his documents had been burnt

The most interesting part of this village is the high rate of road cess the Sonthals have to pay, *e.g* —

Name		Rent. Rs	A	G	Cess Rs	A	G
Baram Manjhi		4	0	0	0	6	0
Basu ,,	...	2	0	0	0	4	0
Nunu ,,	...	8	12	0	1	1	6
Malhi ,,	...	1	11	0	0	3	2
Chuna ,,	...	3	0	0	0	3	0

These figures are taken from the *jamabandi* of one of the proprietors, the other Dikkus (a Dhobi, four Tantis, and one Tafdar) live in the same *tola*, also have to pay road cess at the same rates These *mahajans* settle their land at Re 1 a bigha Besides high road cess, the Sonthals have to give *bethbegari* and provide vegetables free of charge The *mahajans* admit to having raised the rate of interest on account of the scarcity a year or two ago, in one case the interest was as much as 62½ per cent for grain

XXVII—Jainagar Broken—The *mahajan* received a Mandali settlement of his village in 1893 for the zamindar In years gone by the Sonthals used to pay their rent through a Manjhi The village only shows a moderate amount of dispossession

The proprietor's *jamabandis* specially prepared for perusal show cess at half-anna in the rupee, but the villagers say they have to pay 10 pice in the rupee This is quite possible, as other *mahajans* have produced lists of rents showing the cess at a rate of about two annas in the rupee or more Receipts are not granted According to this proprietor (12 annas share), he realizes money rent Rs 75-8-3-10 (3 gundas 10 kags)

Grain rent 8 aras 9 kuris 1½ pais, valued at about Rs 68, and grain debts are due to him of 65 aras, valued at about Rs 520

The Sonthals have to give *bethbegari* during the year, also *mangan*, when the *mahajan* wants to buy a house, or there is a death in his family, and vegetable free of charge

Name	Land lost	Remarks	Present land	Debts: Unsecured	Debts: Secured	Debts: Security	Remarks
Sonato Manjhi	53 bighas	43 bighas Civil Court sale for rent 1902 the rest earlier to Pitambhar Kundu sale for debts	6 bighas	Rs 2 and Rs 9 (1907)			2 pice a month interest taken on account of famine
Dulai Sham	5 bighas 2 bighas	5 bighas sold to Pitambhar Kundu for money not for debts Rs 60 out of Rs 70 repaid six years ago	50 ,,		—		
Bishun ...			6 bighas 5 cottahs	Rs 5			2 pice per month
Lakhai			9 bighas		Rs 70	Bond	Taken to pay expenses of case in which zamindar tried to increase rent
Sundar Narayan			7	14 aras 9 kuris	—		25 per cent.
Moral Manjhi	1 bigha 5 cottahs	Sold to Pitambhar Kundu 21 years ago	10 ,, ...	11 aras 8 kuris			25 ,,
Phagu ,, Madan ,,	40 bighas	30 or 40 years ago ...	40 ,, 10 ,,	8 aras Rs 40 (1907)			No debts. 2 pice interest a month taken for a yoke of buffaloes
Lakha ,, ... Charan		— —	10 13 ,,	16 aras 11 kuris		—	No debts
Jairam ,,	30 bighas	Sold 20 years ago to Pitambhar Kundu.		—	—		No debts
Mahesh ,,	7 bighas	Sold for debts three years ago.	18 bighas			—	Absent
Braju ,,	—		36 ,,				Do

XXVIII.—Hasugoria Intact.—The Manjhi is said to have a *darmukurari* lease of the village but it was not produced.

The following list shows the position of affairs in this village, areas are practically guess work, but the rents are accurate —

NAME	Present area	Rent	Land lost or mortgaged
	Bighas	Rs A P	
Dharma Manjhi ...	40	12 0 0	......
Sham .	8	7 9 0	Bighas 2-10 sold for debts to Gopal Sircar, *mahajan* and proprietor (about 1901).
Chuna	5	3 13 0	Bighas 5 sold to Gopal Sircar
Kaikar . ..	...	1 11 6	Rent paid by *mahajan* 2½ bighas sold to latter (1907)
Ram .		4 0 0	Rent paid by *mahajan* 11 bighas sold to him (1907).
Durga ...	...	2 9 0	Rent paid by *mahajan* 16 bighas sold to him (1907)
Dhunu	5	3 3 6	All mortgaged.
Taru	16	5 7 9	Ditto
Tipa	2	1 0 0	
Juma	12	4 9 0	
Haram ..	14	4 8 0	Nil, but about to lose all, as the *mahajan* has got a decree for his debts, and the lands are to be sold
Tant Haram ..	5	2 9 0	
Chhota Sam ...	28	14 0 0	
Basi Ram	5	3 3 6	
Jaisingh ..	6	2 8 0	
Lupa ...	7½	3 8 9	
Durga Manjhi (of another village).	5	3 8 0	2½ bighas usufructuary mortgage for principal and interest 10 years ago for 12 years
Total .	...	79 12 0	

The total rent of the village *plus* cess is Rs 79-1, so the Manjhi makes no profit The rent was originally Rs 50, then Rs 60, and finally it was raised to Rs 75, and a *darmukurari* given. There were originally *khas* lands in the village, but when the rent was raised, these lands were assessed to rent In some cases lands lost, have been given back on a *sajha bandobust*

APPENDIX I(c)

BINPUR THANA

PARGANA SILDA

MIDNAPORE

I —Kumarbandi Intact —Originally in 1248B, over sixty years ago, the original clearer of this village received a Mandali *patta* of the village at a rental of Rs 16, *bhatta* Re 1, altogether Rs 17, *salami* Re 1, and *parabsani* Re 1 A generation ago the rent was increased to Rs 17-2-3, with cess Rs 12 or Rs 13 after a measurement, which is still paid by the Mandal The Mandal's *jamabandi* shows a rental of Rs. 331-12-9½ and cess Rs 12-8-15, including the rent of his own and his co-sharers' lands The cess is paid by the raiyats, and not by the Mandal's family at all The village is a substantial one This *jamabandi* shows an area of 472 bighas, against an area of 405 bighas in the receipts granted to him by the Midnapore Zamindari Company. The Mandal assesses to rent excess cultivation, but objects to the Zamindari Company doing the same That Company have assessed to rent excess cultivation of 17 bighas odd at a rental of Rs 7, according to the *nayabadi* found this year. The *amla* would not directly admit to it, but apparently it is in contemplation to increase rents for old land by 2 annas in the rupee, and that there is more *nayabadi* in the village which will be assessed at rates which have not yet been fixed I give the Mandal's *jamabandi* below —

	Area. B K CH		Rent Rs A G
Kandan Manjhi	11 0 0		6 4 0
Nayabadi .	3 10 12		2 13 7½
Excess area measured this year by the Mandal this *nayabadi* is being assessed at 10 annas a bigha by the Sonthal (9 bighas sold about 1320 to Ram Narayan Mazumdar)	14 10 12		9 1 7½
		Cess ...	0 9 0

	Area. B.	C.	CH.		Rent. Rs.	A.	G.
Karum Manjhi (10 bighas formerly sold to Ram Narayan Masumdar)	8	8	12		5	4	10
				Cess ..	0	5	5
Dina Nath Barik	26	15	0		16	12	0
(An original *parja*).				" ...	1	1	0
Tintu Mohan Dasi (bought from Taru Manjhi in 1300) ...	5	10	0		3	7	0
				" ...	0	4	0
Baro Lakhan Manjhi ...	1	7	0		0	13	10
				" ...	0	1	10
Durga Manjhi	2	3	8		1	5	15
				" ..	0	1	5
Gurbatta Dasi (sold by Tenta Manjhi for debts about 1286)	12	12	0		7	15	10
				" ...	0	8	0
Turu Manjhi	11	14	0		7	4	0
(5 bighas 10 cottahs formerly lost) ..				" ...	0	7	10
Binola Dasi (land formerly belonged to Narsingh's father, unknown how the present raiyat got it).	5	4	0		3	7	0
				" ..	0	3	10
Ramrai Manjhi ..	3	4	8		2	2	10
				" ...	0	2	0
Pitu "	1	4	0		0	12	0
				" ...	0	1	0
Badyanath "	2	16	12		1	12	7½
				" ...	0	2	0
Nathi " ...	7	11	0		4	11	10
				" ..	0	4	15
Sadhai Manjhi (8 bighas 10 cottahs formerly sold to Jageswar Sunri about 1297)	12	12	8		7	15	5
				" ...	0	8	0
Mandal Manjhi	5	0	0		3	2	0
				" ...	0	3	0
Bhado "	7	18	0		5	10	0
Nayabadi	1	2	0	" ...	0	5	10
	9	0	0				
Hadu Manjhi	1	12	0		2	6	7½
Nayabadi	2	4	10	" .	0	2	10
	3	16	10				
Charan Manjhi ...	7	4	0		4	8	0
				" ...	0	4	10
Bhagrai "	3	0	0		1	14	0
				" ...	0	2	0
Jogeswar Sunri	8	10	0		5	5	0
				" .	0	5	10
Gorai Manjhi	13	13	14		6	1	12
				" ...	0	6	0
Sudai Dutta (bought *nayabadi* from Badrai Manjhi many years ago in 1295)	9	0	0		8	12	16¾
	5	11	11	" ...	0	9	0
	14	1	11		... ..		
Ram Kuar Lohar—							
(bought 7 bighas from Beha Manjhi in 1303),	27	12	49		17	7	17½
(" 9 bighas from Tenta Manjhi in 1285),	......			" ...	1	1	1e
(" 10 bighas from Lakhan Manjhi in 1285)—							
On account of loans							
Ram Lall Bhai (bought from Kalu Manjhi in 1287)	15	2	0		9	7	0
				" ...	0	9	10
Narsingh Manjhi	2	0	0		1	15	11¹
Nayabadi	1	3	0				
	3	3	0	" ...	0	2	0

	Area. B.	C.	CH.		Rent. Rs.	A.	G.
Ganga Narayan Gorun (original raiyat—in Ram Lall Lohar's possession now) ...	9	14	6		6	1	3¾
Susil Manjhi	12	10	0		7	12	0
				Cess ...	0	8	0
Jharu „	4	0	0		3	6	8
Nayabadi .	1	8	13	„ ..	0	3	10
	5	8	13				
Chota Mithu Debi ..	0	6	0		0	8	0
				„ .	0	0	10
Binda Moini Dasi (Rajaram and Dhunu have given their land to cultivate) ...	4	6	0		2	11	0
				„ ...	0	3	0
Girish Chundra Mazumdar (father of the village-*mahajan* Ram Narayan Mazumdar It is said that he was given land to clear)	36	14	0		20	7	15
				„ ...	1	4	10
Ram Narayan Mazumdar— [obtained 9 bighas sold by Kandan Manjhi in 1300, „ 6 „ by Karu Manjhi in 1300, „ 7 „ Tanu Manjhi in 1300, „ 2½ abandoned by Bishnu Manjhi in 1300, „ 10 bighas sold by Karmu Manjhi in 1306 and 1308 sales for debts]	35	11	12		22	3	17½
				„ .	1	6	5
Masahy Manjhi ..	40	0	0		40	0	0
Turku „	17	0	0		17	0	0
Rajaram „ .	18	0	0		18	0	0
Dharo „	29	12	0		29	8	0
Phagu „	21	11	0		21	8	0
Galu „ . ..	3	5	0		3	8	15
	1	18	8				
	5	3	8				
				„ ..	0	3	5
	471	12	2		331	12	9½
				„ ...	12	8	15

Totalling up, it will be found that 115 bighas 1 cottah 4 chittaks have gone into the hands of Dikkus on account of debts incurred by the Sonthals, that is to say that during the last 30 years one-fourth of the cultivation of the village has gone into the hands of Dikkus That more has not gone, appears to be due to the fact that the Sonthal Mandali family is unusually intelligent. They are, however, not at all free from the *mahajans*. About ten years ago they had to borrow some money to pay off the rent due on the village A mortgage of 90 bighas of rent land was executed in favour of Ram Narayan Mazumdar They also had to give an *ijara* of the rents for 11 years Ram Narayan Mazumdar brought a case to get hold of the land, but they have just mortgaged the whole village right and 90 bighas of land for Rs. 1,300 to Ram Lall Lohar, and paid off the first *mahajan* In order to help in repaying the new *mahajan*, the Mandal family have raised their own rents to a rate of Re. 1 a bigha The Mandali family is also threatened with a case regarding a mortgage of 32 bighas valued at Rs 1,100 It is very doubtful that they can now survive.

Rajaram has just been through the Civil Court. He had mortgaged 10 bighas of his land in this village, and a fourth share of this village; the *mahajan* got a decree, but the Sonthal made a *kistibandi* to pay Rs 132 a year for three years.

Karmu Manjhi is at the time of writing in the Civil Court. He is being sued by Ram Narayan Mazumdar on a mortgage of all his land (8 bighas 8 cottahs 12 chittaks), but the mortgage is denied by the Sonthal. Interest was usually 4 kuris in the area, but has lately been raised to 8 kuris.

The tahsildar of the company gets 2 pice in the rupee of rent, Rs. 6 *tahriri*. *Beth begari* is not now given Six persons in this village can read and write.

II.—Gundapal, Old, but broken—The present headman is the great grandson of the original clearer of the soil. The money-lenders who are purchasing the lands of the Sonthals are temporarily re-settling them with Sonthals other than the original owners at exorbitant rates of *sajha* (paddy rent).

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land cost.	REMARKS
1	12	5	Sold to money-lenders for debts
2	......	.....	......
3	..	19	Purchased by landlord by rent decree.
4	....	10	Sold to money-lenders for debts.
5	......	6	Ditto ditto
		9	Arbitary eviction by landlord
		2½	Sold for debts.
6	......	16	Sold to money-lenders for debts.
7	2	2	Ditto ditto
		8½	Ditto ditto
8	2	13½	Purchased by landlord by rent decree.
9	......	12	Sold to money-lender for debts
10	...	11	Ditto ditto
11	.....	11	Ditto ditto
12	......	24	Arbitrary eviction by landlord
13	4	4	Appropriated by a lessee to whom the land had been sub-leased
14	20	......	Also holds 12 bighas more, temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other lands, at a rent of 6 aras (valued at about Rs 37-8)
15	4	....	Also holds 12 bighas more, temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other lands
16	4	......	Temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other's lands, at a rental of 2 aras
17	3¾	.....	Temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other's lands, at a rental of 1 ara 14 kuris
18	4½	....	Temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other's lands, at a rental of 2½ aras.
19	3	...	Temporarily settled by a money-lender who purchased other's lands, at a rental of 1½ aras
20	43	.....	
21	20		.
22	29	...	......
23	16	....	...
24	...	......	......
25	59	.....	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken 4 years ago Repaid Rs 120 Still due Rs. 800 Interest 37.5 per cent A civil suit has already been instituted for the realization of the amount.
26		......	
27		13	Sold to money-lender for debts
28	..	6	Ditto ditto.

MAHAL LALGARH

III.—Bhangadah—Intact

Reports by Maulvi Saiyid Muhamad Nasiruddin

1 A purely Sontali village, having a population of 14 Sonthal houses under the Raja of Lalgarh

2 There is a Sonthal Mandal who holds 6 bighas *khem* land and 31 bighas *jote* in the names of his wife and son, making nominal payments of rents for these lands He makes a profit out of the rents realised from the raiyats themselves

Village *jama* paid by the Sontal Mandal to the zamindar	Rent realized from the raiyats.
Rs. 115-6-6 (including cesses) *plus* 5 aras paddy	Rs 163-4-3 *plus* 4 aras 3 kuris 6 pies paddy

The zamindar realizes—(1) cesses for *sajha* paddy; and (2) a cess called *projar monafar upor dhaarja* cess on the excess collection of the Mandal amounting to Rs. 4-7, besides the Road and Public Works cesses.

3 The Sonthals have not lost their lands.

Serial No	Land formerly held.	Land now held.	Amount of land lost	Old rent	Present rent	Debts			Remarks.
						Unsecured	Secured	Security	
	B C CH	B C CH.							
1	6 0 0	6 0 0				Rs 96+7½ aras	Rs 90	Rs 47 15-10 in Dhama la village	Mortgage Held by Sonthal Moroi himself only in his family members name.
2								--	
3	89 17 0	89 17 0			Rs. 34-6+12 kuri.		14 aras 18 c + Rs 28	89 bighas mortgaged.	Same area previous and present.
4	26 5 10	32 5 10		Rs 16+8 kuris for bighas 26-5 10	Rs 23 3+10 kuris 2 pie for present area				
5	17 9 5	17 9 5		Rs 11-5+6 kuris	Rs 12-3-3+6 kuris 4 pies.	8 aras 4 kuris			Same area
6	21 10 0	21 10 0	--	Rs 13 5+6 kuris	" 14-8+6 kuris 6 pies			-	
7	13 0 0	19 18 15		Rs 8 10+4 kuris for 3 bigha.	Rs 13-1-5+5 kuris 2 pies	Rs 4+8 aras (sic) 1,316.	--	---	
8	17 17 10	17 17 10	-	Rs 10-8+4 kuris	Rs 11 3+5 kuris 5 pies	5 aras 1,316 (derhia)		..	Same area.
9	16 3 0	21 7 16		Rs 8-5+6 kuris for 15-8 bighas	Rs 11 13-3+5 kuris 5 pies.	8 aras 14 kuris 1,316	--	--	
10	16 17 0	21 13 10		Rs. 11-8+6 kuris for 16-17 bighas	Rs 14-5+6 kuris 4 pies.	11 ara 6 kuris + Rs 5 (sic) 1,316			
11	1 0 0	1 10 0		As 14+6 pies for 1 bigha	Rs 1 8+1 kuri		---		
12	1 19 0	3 5 5		Rs 1 14+1 kuris for 2 pies	Rs 2-9+2 kuris 2 pies.	--			
13	7 2 10	7 2 10		Rs 5+3 kuris	Rs 5+3 kuris	—		...	Same area
14	9 0 0	9 0 0		Rs 5+3 kuris	Rs. 5+3 kuris				

IV—Village Dhansola.—Broken.

	Houses.
Village pupulation	48
Sonthal "	44

Fourteen houses of Sonthals hold lands in this village, and 6 houses of Sonthals hold their lands in another village.

2. The Sonthal Mandal sold his interest in satisfaction of debts which worked out according to the *mahajan* to Rs. 600.

3 The Santhal raiyats remained in possession of their lands. The Sonthals have not lost their lands. Some of them have mortgaged their lands for debts.

4. Rents have been enhanced on account of increased area under cultivation A comparison of the rents and areas of certain tenants recorded shows that whereas the area has increased from 150 to 190 bighas, the rent has increased from Rs 100 and 2 aras of grain (valued at Rs 12-8) to Rs 142 and 2 aras odd A simple proportion sum shows that the rate of increase in rent is slightly higher than the rate of increase of area, which should not be the case as the new cultivation is less valuable than the old

MAHAL RAMGARH

V.—Benachapra Intact—

	Houses
Village population	12
Sonthal " ...	11 and our (Kamar).

1. There is a Sonthal Mandal under the Raja of Ramgarh. There are 2 co-sharers, each having 6 bighas of *khem* lands. For their other lands they pay rent.

2. The Sonthals have lost 30 bighas, having sold their lands to *mahajans* in satisfaction of their debts. About 28 bighas 8 cottahs of lands are mortgaged to *mahajans* for debts. Eleven Sonthal houses now hold 146 bighas 7 cottahs 1 chittak.

3. In this village, like other villages in this area, both the Mandal and his raiyats pay both sorts of rents combined, viz, in cash and in kind The present village *jama* is Rs. 27 *plus* Rs 6 cesses, besides 21 aras 10 kuris 7 pies paddy The village has been privately measured by the Raja from time to time, and the *jama* always enhanced There has been enhancement from Rs 8 to Rs 12, from Rs. 12 to Rs 14, from Rs. 14 to Rs 20 and from Rs. 20 to Rs. 27.

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost.	REMARKS	Debts			REMARKS
				Unsecured	Secured	Security	
	B C CH.	B C CH.					
1	6 0 0	13 10 0	6 bighas 10 cottahs sold to *mahajan* for debts by arbitrary eviction for debts				
2	13 10 0			Rs 38 11			Interest 6 annas per rupee
3	15 0 0			,, 50-8		.	Ditto ditto
4	10 8 0						
5	7 0 0	12 0 0	Sold for debt				
6	16 0 0						
7	2 10 0	4 10 0					
8	29 0 0						
9	14 11 0						
10	22 7 10			10 aras			4 kuris per ara.
11	10 or 12 bighas						
	146 7 1	30 0 0	..			..	

MAHAL RAMGARH

Other Tribes

BAURIS

***VI*—*Indadanga Broken*—**This is a purely Bauri village, having a population of nine houses of Bauris

Report by Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin.

2. The Mandali right is now held by a Teli

3 The old village *jama* was Rs 10 It has been enhanced to nearly double of what was paid by the Bauri raiyats to the Bauri Mandal —

Serial No	Amount of land now held.			Amount of land lost			Old rent		Present rent		REMARKS.
	B	C	CH	B.	C.	CH	Rs	A	Rs.	A	
1		.		100	0	0	Rent-free		...		Alleged arbitrary eviction.
2	15	17	15	4	2	5	5	0	9	0	
3	31	1	12		...		2	8	15	8	Same area held all along.
4	17	13	0		.		3	0	8	13	
5	5	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	2	8	
6	3	10	0		.		0	10	1	8	
7	5	0	0		...		1	8	3	0	Same area held all along.
8	5	0	0		. .		1	8	2	8	
9	10	0	0		...		3	0	5	0	
10	12	0	0		...		3	0	6	0	
Total	105	2	7	106	2	5	...		...		

DESHWALI SONTHALS

Pargana Silda.

VII.—Adargorey : Broken.—The Deshwalis have been living in this village for four generations The tenure-holders as money-lenders have acquired most of the lands of the village.

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin

Serial No.	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost.	Remarks	Debts, Unsecured.	Debts, Secured	Debts, Security	Remarks.
	Bighas	Bighas.					
2	10	7	Sold to money-lenders for debts.	Rs. 41 14½ aras of paddy.	— —1	...	Interest 37 5 per cent " 50
3	1	12		..	—		8 pies = 1 kuri 16 kuris = 1 ara.
4							
5		16		—		...	
6		12				..	
7		8	Abandoned		..		
8	...	7	Sold to money lender for debts	—			
9	6	5	Arbitrary eviction by tenure-holder	4 aras of paddy	..	...	Interest 50 per cent

BHUMIJES.

VIII —Bhim Arjun Broken —The Bhumijes have been living in this village for four generations.

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts, Unsecured.	Debts, Secured,	Debts, Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas.					
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6	4	Appropriated by usufructuary mortgage	3¼ aras of paddy.	—		Interest 50 per cent
		30	Sold to money lender for debts.	..			
6	5	4	Appropriated by usufructuary mortgage	15 aras of paddy			Interest 50 per cent
		10	Sold in auction for debts				
7	20						
8	6	6	Sold to money lender for debts	5¼ aras of paddy			Interest 50 per cent
9	4	8	Ditto Ditto	12 Ditto	..		Ditto
10	..						
11	...	7	Sold to money-lender for debts	3 aras of paddy	.		Interest 50 per cent
12	11						
13	...	9	Sold to money lender for debts.				
14	6	14	Appropriated by usufructuary mortgage	7 aras of paddy	—		Interest 50 per cent
15	5	2	Sold to money-lender for debts.				
16	..	7	Ditto Ditto	—			
17	10	..		..	—		
18	7¼						
19				—			
20		18	Sold to money-lender for debts.				

BHUIYANS.

IX —Chaknapal Broken —The Bhuiyans have been living in this village for three generations.

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts, Unsecured	Debts, Secured	Debts, Security	Remarks
	Bighas	Bighas.					
1		40	Sold to money-lender for debts.				
2	20	10	Ditto Ditto	1½ aras of paddy			Interest 50 per cent
3	8	14	Ditto Ditto	3 ditto			Ditto
4	4	21	Sold to money-lender for debts who re-settled 4 bighas shewn in column B	ditto.			Ditto.
5		16	Sold to money lender for debts.	—			Interest 50 per cent
6	4	15	Sold in auction for debts	3¼ aras of paddy.			
7	3	18	Sold to money-lender for debts.	—			
8	5¼	...		—			
9	12			.		.	Interest 50 per cent
10	4¼	—					
11	20	—	—	10½ aras of paddy	Rs 100,	3 bighas	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken 4 years ago. Repaid Rs 100 Still due Rs 100 Interest 24 per cent
					" 100	10 "	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken a year ago None repaid Interest 37 5 per cent
12, 13, 14	13		...	—	—		
15	10	—		—		..	
16		10	Sold for debts.	..		—	

MUNDAS.

X—Pachapan Broken—The Mundas have been living in this village for three generations. The tenure-holders, as money-lenders have acquired most of the lands transferred for debts.

Serial No.	Amount of land now held	Amount of land now lost.	REMARKS.
	Bighas.	Bighas.	
1	...	13	Arbitrary eviction by tenure-holders
2	.	13	
3	...	17	Sold to money-lender for debts.
4	.	45	
5		12	Sold for consideration.
6	...	12	Sold for debts.
7	...	8	
8	...	8	
9	7	7	
10	...	16	Sold to money-lender for debts.
11	10	...	
12	...	10	Sold to money-lender for debts.
13	8	...	
14	18	...	
15	7	.	
16	...	6	Sold for debts.
17	...	8	Arbitrary eviction by tenure-holders.
18	...	11	Sold for debts.
19	...	24	Arbitrary eviction by tenure-holders
20	...	7	Sold for debts.

Maulvi Ekramuddin interrogated the tenure-holder about each case of arbitrary eviction, but the latter could not give any satisfactory explanation.

GARHBETA THANA.

XI—Bulanpur Broken—

	Houses.
Sonthals	28
Kurmis	9
Hindus—Bengalis	20

Reports by Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin

The Sonthal Mandal sold his right

2 The Sonthals lost the major portion of their lands by sale in favour of *mahajans*, in lieu of their debts—

	Bighas.
Area now held ...	74
Amount of land lost ...	508

	Rs.	A.	P.	
Old village *jama* in 1263 ...	42	13	1	For *mot*-mauza.
Jama in 1275	190	0	0	For 659 bighas 18 cottahs 15 chittaks (5 annas 7 pies per bigha for cultivable lands, 4 annas per bigha and 2 annas 6 pies per bigha other lands.
Present rate of rent	0	10	0	per bigha.

XII.—Doomoria Broken.—

	Houses.
Sonthal population	25
Village „	42

Bengalis have got the Mandali interest in this village; and they are called *aimadars* in this area

2 Only three houses of Sonthals now hold 28 bighas, and 404 bighas have been lost to the present Dikku *aimadars* (who were formerly the Sonthals' *mahajans*) in satisfaction of debts

3 The other Sonthals now living in the village work as labourers or cultivate lands *bhagti*. Some of the Sonthals hold *gora* lands directly under the patnidar, paying rent individually at the rate of 6 annas per bigha.

XIII —Rangtia Broken —

			Houses.
Village population	..	..	27
Sonthal "		...	20

(Sonthals and Hindu-Bengalis)

1 Seventeen houses of Sonthals are labourers.

2 Budinath Manjhi incurred debts in litigation in fighting a suit for enhancement of rent brought by the patnidar, and sold 8 annas of the Mandali right The purchasers subsequently obtained the whole 16 annas

Budinath took a settlement of 100 bighas from the purchaser at 9 annas per bigha. But these lands were sold in auction for arrears of rent His heir now holds 10 bighas at Rs. 11-4 rent Three other Sonthals hold lands paying enhanced rent at about Re 1 per bigha

XIV.—Benachapra Broken —Forty houses of Sonthals only.

The Sonthal Mandal was responsible for the collective payment of the village *jama* to the Dikku *aimadar*; he held 12 bighas *khem* lands The Sonthal Mandal surrendered the Mandali right, and since then the Sonthals have been paying rent separately.

2 Eight Sonthals hold 81 bighas 18 cottahs 5 chittaks Thirteen Sonthals have lost 97 bighas to *mahajans* by private sale in satisfaction of their debts Most of the Sonthals are labourers

3 An old *patta* of 1250 shows the rate of rent as 4 annas, 6 annas, 8 annas and 12 annas per bigha In cases of settlement of lands after the sale of the raiyati interest, the rate has been much enhanced *e g*, Badul Sonthal holds 4 bighas at Rs 9, and Lakhiram Sonthal holds 3 bighas at Rs 6-4

No XI

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Debts			Remarks
			Unsecured	Secured	Security	
	B c CH	B c		Rs	Rs	
1	70 0 0	293 0 including jungle and *banu* lands	...	230	70 mortgaged.	
2	4 0 0	21 0	4 aras	...	...	Holds land a *kurfa* raiyats
3	0 10 0	5 8	...	...	...	
4	..	90 0	17 aras 1 kuri	...	...	Holds 8 bighas *kurfa* tenancy, and 4 bighas under *sajha*
5	......	14 10	1½ aras ...	..	...	Holds 2 bighas *kurfa* tenancy.
6	....	44 0	...	...	...	
7	.	18 0	...	...	..	
8	. .	14 0	..	.	...	
9	..	9 0	.	...	..	
	74 0 0	508 0 Sale deeds executed in satisfaction of debts.	.	...	...	

No. XII.

Serial No.	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost.	Remarks.
	B. c. ch	B. c	
1	5 0 0	19 0	Sold in satisfaction of debts.
2	7 0 0	12 0	
3	...	80 0	Lost after a suit. In possession of the Dhikku *aimadars*.
4	..	70 0	
5	...	20 0	
6	...	30 0	
7	...	40 0	Lost after the death of the tenants. In possession of Banomali Ghosh, *aimadar*.
8	...	30 0	
9	..	15 0	
10	16 0 0	48 0	
11		40 0	
	28 0 0	404 0	

No. XIII

Serial No.	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Debts—Unsecured	Remarks.
	B. c ch	B c		
1	10 0 0	90 0	7 aras 10 kuris.	Sold up in auction for arrears of rent
2	9 0 0	...	1 ara 10 kuris.	
3	11 0 0	...	... ..	
4	9 0 0	.	1 ara 3 kuris	
5	...	5 0	... ..	Sold up in auction for debt. (Regular Civil Court decree)
6	.. ...	22 0	. ....	
7	... .	25 0	.....	Sale-deed executed, Rs 100 consideration money.
8	......	14 0	... ..	
	39 0 0	156 0	10 aras 7 kuris	

No. XIV.

1	20 0 0	1 0	2 aras ..	
2	8 18 5	3 0	33 aras 14 kuris 9 pies.	This tenant took settlement of three bighas after sale.
3	6 0 0	12 0	.. . .	
4	7 0 0	7 0	....	
5	6 0 0	8 0	...	
6	14 0 0	..	... ..	
7	4 0 0	4 0	... .	
8	16 0 0	..	...	
9	......	6 0	......	
10	......	12 0	. ..	
11	......	13 0	12 aras 8 kuris.	Took settlement of four bighas lands after sale.
12	.. ..	20 0	......	
13	....	11 0	. . ..	
	81 18 5	97 0	......	

KURMIS

XV.—Kend-kanali Broken—

				Houses.
Kurmis	...	...		30
Sonthals	...	. .	...	20
Domes	...		...	10
H Bengalis ..		.	..	1

This is a Kurmi village, in which the alien raiyats are Sonthals and Domes.

2. There is a Mahto Mandal who has still a 4-anna share in the village. Eight annas was sold up in the Civil Court for his debts, and 4 annas was sold by a co-sharer, a *dar-mokarari* being taken in exchange.

3 This is a typical Kurmi village, in which the old *thica jama* of the village (Rs 19-3-14)* for about 2,500 bighas lands (including jungle and 800 bighas cultivable lands) still exists The patnidar (Midnapore Zamindari Company, Limited) is trying to have the *jama* enhanced, and the old village *thica jama* cancelled The suits have gone up to the High Court

4. The raiyats also pay the old rate of rents 8 annas per bigha There has been no enhancement in their *jama* recently

5 The Mandals have got 92 bighas *khem* lands, and besides this make a large amount of profit out of the rents, (about Rs. 400) realized from the raiyats

Serial No.	Amount of land now held.			Amount of land lost		Old rent		Present rent.		REMARKS.
	B.	C	CH.	B	C	Rs	A.	Rs	A.	
1	...			92	0	...		...		92 bighas were held as Mandali *khem* for 8 annas share sold up in auction at the Civil Court (regular) for a debt of Rs 11,800
2	46	0	0	...				...		Mandali *khem* 4 annas share.
3	46	0	0	...		...		Not known		He now holds these lands under *dar-mokarari* settlement.
4	24	0	0	. .		12	0	12	0	
5	17	0	0			13	0	13	0	
6	21	0	0	...		14	6	14	6	Mortgaged to No. 3
7	7	10	0			5	4	5	4	
8	10	9	0	...		6	0	6	0	
9	8	0	0	...		9	0	9	0	
10				12	0	7	0	...		He holds these lands under *sajha* settlement, and pays 3 *aras* paddy to the purchaser, Gour Mehtor
11	20	0	0	...		8	0	8	0	
12	14	0	0	...		5	0	5	0	
13	.			14	0	6	4	...		Sold to No 3
14	..			4	0	5	0	..		He holds these 14 bighas under *sajha* settlement, and pays 3 *aras* paddy to purchaser of raiyati interest.
15	. ..			8	0	6	0	...		Holds these lands under *sajha* settlement
16	24	0	0	...		8	0	8	0	Sold to No 3
17	6	0	0	...		5	0	5	0	
18	.. ...			7	0	7	0	...		Sold to No. 3.
19	15	0	0	.		7	8	7	8	
20	19	0	0	.		7	0	7	0	
21	.. ...			12	0	7	0	..		
22				9	0	9	0			Abandoned.
23	7	12	11	..		2	8	2	8	
24	6	10	0	.		1	5	1	5	
25	2	10	0	. .		2	8	2	8	
26	4	0	0	...		1	0	1	0	
Total	298	11	10	168	0	..		...		

* Gandas.

Thana Salbani.

XVI.—Nadarsa : Broken.—

	Houses.
Village population	60
Sonthal "	40

1. It is alleged that the tahsildar of the patnidar got the Mandali right (called *ijara*) transferred to himself by not granting the Sonthal ijaradar rent-receipts for the rents paid by him, and thus falsely putting him into arrears for rent.

Reports by Maulvi Saiyid Muhammad Nasiruddin

2. The Sonthal *ijaradar's* family holds 50 bighas lands at Rs. 18-12 rent But the rate of rent paid by the other raiyats is Rs. 1-4 per bigha for all classes of lands.

3 There is a Mission *patshala* in the village itself, and the Pandit Bunaram Hemrom is also a Sonthal Eighteen Sonthal houses from this village attend this *patshala*

4 Now 27 Sonthal houses hold lands Twenty houses, as per statement annexed, hold 217 bighas 14 cottahs 12½ chittaks, and have lost 24 bighas 11 cottahs 17½ chittaks lands.

Serial No	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost	Remarks.	Debts—Unsecured.	Remarks
	B C CH	B. C. CH			
1, 2, 3	30 0 0	——	–	——	
4	24 7 5	5 0 0	Sold to *mahajan* for debts	1 ara	Interest 4 kuris per ara
5	18 1 0			11 aras 4 kuris *plus* Rs 8	Ditto.
6	7 8 0	3 0 0	Sold for Rs 30 c. m.	7 aras	5 maunds paddy per rupee
7	7 18 10	–	–	14 aras *plus* Rs 10 or 3 kuris.	Ditto.
8	13 5 15	– –		7 aras Rs 46	5 maunds paddy per rupee 18 per rupee interest.
9	25 5 13½	–		14 aras 6 kuris *plus* Rs. 8.	Ditto (4 kuri=1 *maunds*)
10	14 17 21½	—			
11	1 8 15		——	15 kuris	
12	13 6 12½		–	–	
13	9 0 0	–			
14	7 0 0	–		3 aras –	
15	4 16 10				
16	18 7 0	– –		5 aras 10½ kuris	
17		5 11 17½	Arbitrary eviction	7 aras 10 kuris *plus* Rs. 14.	
18		6 0 0	Ditto		
19	—	5 13 0	Ditto		
Total	217 14 12½	24 11 17½			

XVII—Rupaipur Broken—This is purely a Sonthali village It has a population of 23 Sonthal houses. Sixteen Sonthal houses hold lands

2. The Sonthals pay rent to a non-Sonthal *ijaradar*, and the Sonthals have not lost their lands

3. A comparison of rent receipts shows that about seven years ago rent was enhanced by about 2 annas in the rupee

4. The Sonthals have to give *bethbegari* service to the *ijaradar*, and have also to supply one fowl per house gratis ; a payment of anna per rupee *tahrir* is made to the *gomashta* for rent receipts.

5. Twenty or 22 Sonthali children attend the village school here

6 These Sonthals are comparatively better off than others. They have also got lands in other villages.

Jhargram Thana

MAHAL JAMBUNI.

XVIII—Ranipal Broken.—The original clearers of the soil are still living. The tenure-holder has arbitrarily increased the rent of the village after a measurement.

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin.

XIX.—Dhuniapal : Broken—The original clearers of the soil are still living. The tenure-holder increased the rent of the raiyats by having their lands measured.

XX.—Bhadua Broken.—The present headman is the fifth in descent from the original clearer of the soil He is still Mandal of the village for 4 annas share. He and his co-sharers increased the rent of the raiyats on an increase in his own rent being made by the landlords.

No. XVIII (above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Debts.			Remarks.
				Unsecured	Secured.	Security	
	Bighas.	Bighas					
1	6	21	Sold to money lender for debts				
2	½	3	Ditto ditto.				
3	1						
4	1½						
5	12	...		5 aras of paddy		...	Interest 50 per cent
6	18	...			1 bis of paddy.	18 bighas ...	" 37·5 " "
7	18	...		...	1 bis 1 ara of paddy	18 " ...	" 37·5 " "

No. XIX (above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Unsecured	Secured.	Security	Remarks.
1	19	...	...	..	5 aras of paddy	10 bighas ...	Simple mortgage Repaid 9 aras, Still due 2 bis. Interest 37 5 per cent.
2	41	...	...	...	10 aras of paddy	10 " ...	Simple mortgage. Re-paid 6 aras. Still due 2 bis. Interest 37 5 per cent
3	3	...		...		...	
4	5	...	...	...	.	...	
5	...	20	Sold to money-lender for debts	...	...	...	
6	8	29	Ditto ditto	...			
7	3½	...	...	...	...	...	
8	8	...		...		...	
9	8	...	...		...	...	
10		19	Sold to money lender for debts	...		...	

No. XX (above).

Serial No	Amount of land now held.	Amount of land lost	Remarks	Unsecured	Secured.	Security	Remarks.
1							
2							
3							
4							
5	14	40	Sold to money lender for debts who re-settled 14 bighas.	...	...	...	
6							
7							
8							
9							
10	23		...	...	...	...	
11	3	...		...	3 aras of paddy.	3 bighas ...	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken Interest 37 per cent. Now due 1 bish 18 aras.
12	5	6½	Sold to the money-lender for debts.	...	...	...	
13	7	...	...	...	...		
14	7½	...			...	...	
15	5	...	...	7 aras of paddy	...	...	Interest 37 5 per cent
16	6½	...	3 bighas under usufructuary mortgage	...	Rs. 60	3 bighas ...	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest.
17							
18							
19	49	40	Sold to money lender for debts	...	16 aras of paddy	15 bighas ...	Interest 37·5 per cent.
20							Simple mortgage. Amount of loan taken Interest 37·5 per cent. Repaid 20 aras. Still due 10 aras.
21							
22	5	6	Sold to money-lender for debts		...	...	

GOPIBALLABHPUR THANA.

BELYABERA MAHAL.

XXI.—Dahamari Broken.—Fourteen Sonthal houses. The village was made *khas* by the proprietor of the pargana K. C. Prohoraj in 1304A. There are only a Gorait and a Manjhi in this village, who distribute the other duties of Naiki and Jog-Manjhi amongst them. There is no Paranick, Jog-Paranick or Kudam Naiki. There is still Naiki *khem* in the village; other *khem* lands never existed.

Rents appear to have been increased in 1304, but original papers are not forthcoming The statement shows mainly indebtedness on account of the recent scarcity, and only a transfer of 20 bighas on account of debts during the last 12 years.

1304			Present time.			Debts.			Remarks.
Area	Rent		Area.	Rent.					
	Money	Sajha.		Money	Sajha.	Unsecured	Secured	Security	
B C CH	Rs A. P		B. C C					Bighas	
56 18 12T Less 0 10 0 55 11 12M 0 17 3S	36 8 7½	0 12 7½	—	Idem	—	—	—	—	No debts.
16 2 6T Less 0 4 0 15 0 2M 0 12 0S	6 13 4½	0 6 ½	15 13 4M 0 12 0S	9 2 4½	6 ½	12 kuris Rs. 4	—	.	31¼ per cent Two pice a month Once executed a mortgage which he repaid.
13 5 12T Less 0 5 0 12 14 10M 0 7 2S	7 8 2½	0 5 10	—	Idem	—	1 ara	2 aras	2	37½ per cent. One simple mortgage (1908)
—					—	—	—		A labourer.
1 6 10T Less 0 1 0 1 5 10M	0 10 12½	—	2 0 2M	1 0 17½	—	2 aras	—	—	Took 2 aras this year, also executed a bond in *Bysak* and repaid it in *Bhador*
13 7 15T Less 0 3 0 12 19 3M 0 6 12S	8 2 1½	0 4 8	13 12 3M 0 6 12S	8 13 8	4 8	—	Unknown	4	Simple mortgage (1908)
32 6 4T Less 0 4 0 31 5 2M 0 17 2S	17 15 1	0 13 6	11 13 12M 0 5 13S	6 4 14½	3 6	—		—	Land originally belonged to a Sonthal who fled on account of his debts 20 bighas of it has been given to a Diku.
	—	—	3 5 8M	1 16 6½	—				No debts.
—	—	—	1 4 ½M	0 15 12½	—	—			Ditto
13 9 17T Less 0 4 0 12 16 9M 0 8 7S	7 3 15½	0 6 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	Absent
14 10 12T 14 3 8 0 6 2	7 4 9	0 5 10	—	—	—	—	12 aras		*Kutbandi* 3 aras for 4 years (1908, One instalment re-paid to proprietor
71 14 10T 7 8 6 0 14 4S	3 15 3	0 13 6	10 10 18M 0 4 4S	6 8 0	3 6	—	—	—	No debts.

T = Total area.
M = Area on money rent
S = Area on *sajah* rent.

XXII—Goharmara Broken (*Six Sonthal and eight Bhumij houses*) —There was formerly a Bhumij Mandal, but the village was resumed by the proprietor K. C Pronoraj in 1304A, after a measurement and assessment of rents in the pargana Rents have not been raised since 1304 The Bhumijes came from Patkum, where their burial-ground (*sasandiri*) is still

BHUMIJES.

Dulan Singh sold all his land, about 6 bighas, to Ledhu Raju.

Nodo Singh has given a usufructuary mortgage of 2 bighas of his land to another Bhumij.

Tengu Singh has taken the above 2 bighas in mortgage (usufructuary) from Nodo. He has got 14 bighas of land. He owes 5 aras 8 kuris and a small debt of Rs 1-8, taken three years ago at interest 2 pice per rupee a month.

1 kuri = 8 seers
16 kuris = 1 ara.

Arjun Singh has lost no land He last year executed a bond for Rs. 20 and 9½ aras of grain, mortgaging 7 bighas of land. The interest on the grain is 5 kuris in the ara (16 kuris)

Gour Singh has lost no land. He mortgaged 3 bighas last year He has a debt of Rs 10, interest being 2 pice in the rupee per month.

Sukra Singh executed a bond in favour of a Mahto for 5 aras this year; he has repaid 4 aras Rupees 7 is due to one Kuar Sen at 2 pice in the rupee interest for money taken to pay rent.

SONTHALS.

Luba Marandi.—He is a labourer, cultivates no land and has no debts.

Lopra Murmu cultivates 3 bighas; has lost no land, and has no debts.

Kandu Murmu cultivates 15 bighas, has never lost any land, and has no debts

Kela Hemrom cultivates 21 bighas. He mortgaged (in 2nd September 1908) 5 bighas 15 cottahs to the proprietor for a debt of 6 aras with interest at 5 kuris in the ara on account of the recent scarcity. In his running account he has made in

arrangement to pay 3 aras a year for 4 years at the same rate of interest, mortgaging in 25th August 1908 10 bighas 18 cottahs. The proprietor's account book shows, including the *kutbandi* of 12 aras, about 19 aras due (excluding seed grain for which he owes 2 aras), of which he has repaid about 8 aras this year. He has also taken a loan of Rs 5 at interest 2 pice in the month to pay his rent

Phagu Marandi owes 2 aras, at rate of interest 8 kuris in the ara He mortgaged last year 5 bighas at the same rate of interest for 3 aras of grain, and has repaid the principal

Kankar Marandi cultivates 5½ bighas, and has lost no land

The distinctive feature of this village is the large number of mortgages executed last year on account of the scarcity in the district in favour of the proprietors and others

GOPIBALLABHPUR THANA.

MAHAL NAYABASAN.

XXIII.—Hatmara Broken—This village consists of Sonthals, Bhumijes and Pans (Tamaria Tantis). The Bhumijes are Deshwali Bhumijes who do not know the Sonthal language. such Bhumijes are rare in this area Formerly there was a Bhumij Mandal who received remuneration at the rate of Rs. 12-8 per cent. The Bhumijes call their priest a *Dheri*

BHUMIJES.	DEBTS.			REMARKS.
	Unsecured	Secured	Security	
Karam Singh	... ...	Rs. 275 ...	6 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage 12 years ago for principal and interest
		7 aras ..	7 „	Simple mortgage 2 years ago. Rate of interest 3½ per cent
Ram Lall „	. ...	... ..	... ...	No debts.
Gauga „	8 kuris ... Rs 11...	... ...	... ...	Taken for payment of rent at 50 per cent interest last year.
Kishtu „	„ 12...	.. .	...	Taken for payment of rent last year, none repaid except interest at the rate of 50 per cent
Charton „	... ...	10 aras ..	2½ bighas	Simple mortgage a year before last None repaid, as crops failed

XXIV.—Salguria Broken.—This village consists of about 40 houses of Sonthals, 7 houses of Bhumijes (Patkumia), an Uriya and a Manjhiman. There was once a Sonthal Prodhan but he was removed. The Manjhi is the Naiki, there is no Kudam-Naiki or Jog-Paranick. There is no *khem* land.

	DEBTS.			REMARKS
	Unsecured.	Secured.	Security	
SONTHALS				
Kandu .	... ..	. ..	... ...	No debts
Karo ..	...	.. ...	... ...	Do.
Bishu ...	Rs. 2 (1907)	... ...	... .	A labourer took the money for clothes, at 1 anna a month interest
Budru ...	2 aras	... ...	... ...	
Sagor ...	Rs 8 (1908)	... ..	... ...	Taken for purchase of a buffalo; interest 2 pice per month in the rupee.
Salku	8 kuris ... Rs. 8 (1907)	... ...	... ...	Taken for seeds 100 per cent. interest; interest 2 pice a month, principal only repaid.
BHUMIJES.				
Gura Singh ...	10 aras ..	6 aras ... Rs. 24.	2 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage for 50 per cent. interest only.
Sibu „ ...		1ara 4 kuris		Secured by a bond.
Rahal „ ...	3 aras. ...	5 aras 8 kuris	3 bighas....	Mortgaged last year on account of scarcity, repaid 4 aras 8 kuris.
Khetra Man-[illegible]	...	... ...	... ...	No debts.

XXV.—Nayagan 2,—Sonatan Patra.—The holding of this man dates from 1310 Formerly Chaiton Manjhi, Monoo Manjhi and Sukra Singh had three *jotes* of two bighas 7 cottahs 8 chattaks, 10 cottahs 2 chattaks, and 1 bigha 19 cottas, respectively

Reports by Babu Rampada Chatarji Deputy Collector.

But they went away from the village, leaving their lands to take care of themselves Sonatan Patra took settlement of these lands from the estate with 10 bighas 17 cottahs out of waste land in 1310. But fearing that the heirs of the former tenants might claim the lands afterwards, he got hold of the old raiyats at their new homes in Mourbhanj and got a *kabala* executed by Chaiton Manjhi and Manoo Manjhi, on paying them some money. Sukra Singh was dead without any heir by that time and consequently no *kabala* was executed by him or his heirs, there is no other non-aboriginal tenant in this village

XXVI —Raiboni.—Sudarson Ghose and others —This holding formerly belonged to Sambhu Singh (Bhumij) Under a *kabala* , Sudarson Ghose and others purchased it in 1900 The vendor has left the village and now lives in Majhal Bhag in Mourbhanj, where he has got fresh land There is no other non-aboriginal tenant in the village

Jangal Sing is a tenant in the village. His *mahajans* are Dhoninjoy Bera and Kapa Paira of Sangre. From them he used to take occasional loans of paddy. No documents are executed for such loans The *mahajans* have got a *khata* (book) of their own, in which they make the entry of the quantity of the paddy taken, and in these books the person taking loan has to append his signature or mark The condition of the loan is that, at the first harvest, the debtor will have to pay 50 per cent over and above the quantity taken If any quantity is left unpaid, compound interest at the rate of 50 per cent is taken per year The account remains exclusively in the hands of the *mahajans*, and they can manipulate it as they like My experience is that, if a man once falls in the grip of the *mahajan*, he seldom gets out of it unscathed without losing the whole or at least a part of the holding. In the above particular instance, the aforesaid *mahajans* have converted the paddy dues into cash, and have got two mortgage deeds executed for 3 bighas of the tenant's lands each for Rs 76 and Rs 68, respectively. At present it is a simple mortgage. The lands are in possession of the mortgagor The *mahajans* are sitting tight over the document, and, I am afraid, a few years hence Jangal Sing will have to part with his entire area in liquidation of debts thus contracted, and will have to cast his lot in the wilds of Mourbhanj.

XXVII —Asanbani —Kanoo Sao is a *mahajan*, and has got extensive paddy-lending and money-lending business He purchased the lands of Dahiloo Singh, son of Khada Singh, about 6 or 7 years ago, under a registered *kabala* The circumstances which led to the purchase are the same as described above in connection with the mortgage of Jangal Singh. After sale, the vendor went away to Mourbhanj to reclaim new lands out of the jungle He did not come back He is now dead

Pachoo Ghose —This holding formerly belonged to Jati Singh, whose *mahajan* he, was This man had to sell most of the area of his holding to his *mahajan* Pachoo Ghose The circumstances which led to the sale are the same as above After the sale, only a small area remained in his possession which he used to cultivate, and also used to find his livelihood by working as a day-labourer. Afterwards the remainder was mortgaged with possession to one Danoo Giri in the name of his sister-in-law Jati Singh is now dead His sons, Biru, Noka, Lodha and Godi Singh, are now ordinary day-labourers

XXVIII.—Jharianala—Kanu Sao.—The same person as in the above village. He purchased the area from the same Dahiloo Singh as above, under the same circumstances.

Jati Singh has mortgaged the area in this village also to the aforesaid Damoo Giri, and has got no land now. His sons are now day-labourers

XXIX —Dhobadahi.—Kripasindhu Bera, Kuor Dehuri, Goda Naik, Gubi Khamri, and Chaiton Khamri took settlement out of *khas patit*

Jhampal Senapati was *mahajan* of Lakhan Manjhi, who took some loans of paddy from him; but being unable to pay it off with interest, he partitioned off one bigha of his land in favour of Jhampal Senapati. He is dead His son has now 4 bighas 11 cottahs of land This area, together with the aforesaid one bigha, was recently reclaimed land This is an instance showing that *khajnar upjukta* land (*i e*, land for which rent had not yet been assessed) was sold The son of Lakhan Manjhi cultivates his own lands

Fakir Dehuri, Bimbadhur Kar, Bharta Naik and Hruda Khamri took settlement out of *khas patit* There are no other non-aboriginal raiyats in the village

XXX.—Jagannathpur—Kartick Senapati (khatian 2), Darje Sao, Narayan Bij Satyanath Senapati.—Almost the entire area belonging to these men formerly belonged to Bisu Manjhi, who was *prodhan* of the village One Naran Giri managed to get a bogus *amulnamah* for the lands in possession of Bisu Manjhi, and wanted to take possession of it A civil suit ensued For the cost, Bisu took some loans from Satyanath Senapati and Shibu Karan But partly for this debt, partly for Civil Court costs and partly for, arrears of rent, he had to sell the entire holding. The aforesaid persons have partitioned his *jote* amongst themselves. Bisu has left the village, and now lives in Kukrajuri, in Mourbhanj

Shiba Karan purchased the land of Bisu's brother, Jagta Manjhi He was also a *mahajan*. Jagta has left the village and now lives in Mourbhanj

Hari De is not a *mahajan* He is in possession of the holding which formely belonged to Baya Manjhi The latter left the village for fear of evil spirits, whose influence brought illness and death in his family He now lives in Pathandha in this pargana, where he has got a holding of 3 bighas 9 cottahs 8 chittaks

By-the-bye, it is not out of place to note here that the Sonthals are mortally afraid of evil spirits. If any illness or death occurs in his house, he is sure to leave it and to remove with bag and baggages to a new site in the same village. If the same calamity visits him there also, he moves on to another place. If the evil spirit haunts him still, he at length leaves the village, relinquishing his house, lands and everything. If at that time he gets some money, even a nominal amount for his *jote*, so much so good, if not, he does not care for it. When cultivation had not spread so much, and there were more jungles, the evil spirits used to muster strong in particular localities; groups of villagers used to leave their house and homes and lands and move to fresh sites in other villages. Such an instance I found in village Dakhinasol (No. 93).

XXXI.—Mundakati.—One Nita Singh (Bhumij) had a large area in the village. On his death his son, Panda Singh, finding that there was a large arrear of rent due from him, and also that there was a big debt to *mahajans*, went away from the village, relinquishing his lands, as at that time there was not much demand for land, and consequently no practice of sale. The holding was partitioned into small parcels and settled with Ananta Nanda, Kali Behara, Narain Behara, Bamdeb Bera and Bharat Barik, besides with Tipoo Singh (Bhumij), Gura Singh (Bhumij), Gadi Singh (Bhumij) and Mangol Singh (Bhumij). Panda Singh now lives in Mourbhanj.

Kali Behara got only 12 cottahs from his predecessor-in-interest, Jhampal Behara, in whose name there stood 12 cottahs in 1291, to this a large area from Nita Singh was added, giving rise to his present holding.

Naran Nanda is in possession of lands which stood in the name of Baidi Narayan Patnaik in the *jamabandi* of 1291.

There are no other non-aboriginal tenants in the village.

XXXII.—Duldah—Krishna Digar and others.—The area formerly belonged to Chandra Manjhi, who sold the area to Jukta Behara by a private *kabala*. The latter was not his *mahajan*. This is a *bonâ-fide* sale. Krishna Digar is the nephew of Jukta, and is now in possession of the area. Chandra's son, Kalachand Manjhi, has got his own holding in the village.

Gangadhor Sao and Damidar Sao.—This holding formerly was part of a parent holding belonging to Bisu Manjhi, who mortgaged this area to the aforesaid persons for Rs. 24. Being unable to pay the amount, he gave up the area in favour of the *mahajans*, who got *dakhil kharij* in the landlords' *sherista*. No *kabala* was executed. Bisu's son has got other lands, which he cultivates.

Gangadhor Sao purchased lands of Dukhua Manjhi by private sale. The latter has left the village, as his two sons died in it. Gangadhor Sao was not his *mahajan*.

This is a *bonâ-fide* sale. Dukhia Manjhi now lives in Mourbhanj.

Sankar Bij took settlement of his lands out of *patit*.

Gopinath Singh was the *mahajan* of Fagoo Manjhi. The latter could not pay up his debt, and had to sell the entire area to his *mahajan*. At present Fagoo Manjhi lives in Kukrajuri in Mourbhanj, where he has reclaimed a large area and cultivates it.

There are no other non-aboriginal tenants in the village.

XXXIII.—Pitalan—Sahadeb Rana.—The jungle was cut away by Dhonai Manjhi; but he could not bring the area under cultivation, as a *khal* had to be bunded. He let up the area to lapse again into jungle. After a few years Sahadeb Rana took settlement of it from the estate. Dhanai Manjhi was afterwards killed by a bear. His sons now live in Mourbhanj.

XXXIV.—Nohamaha—Kasinath Mahakur and others.—This holding formerly belonged to one Baijoon Manjhi. Shib Narain Panda is his *mahajan*. Baijoon Manjhi fell into arrears of rent. The estate brought a rent suit against him and got a decree, in execution whereof his holding was sold up and purchased in public auction by Kasinath Mahakur in 1309-10. After this sale, Baijoon Manjhi removed to Chhatinasol, where his son, Ramdas Manjhi, is a day-labourer now.

Krishna Kundu.—This holding formerly belonged to Mansing Manjhi. It was sold in public auction in execution of a decree for arrears of rent, and purchased by one Baistob Giri of Alampur, who sold it to Krishna Kundu under a private deed of sale. After this sale Mansing Manjhi took possession of the lands of one Fulrai Manjhi, who had left the village, relinquishing his lands. But subsequently he sold the area to Khatu Ghose of Guhia Dangar under a private deed of sale. This is a *bona fide* sale. Mansing Manjhi has now left the village, and has gone to Jhawri to reclaim new lands out of the jungle.

Kandra Manjhi.—Bhagaban Chund was Kandra's *mahajan*. He brought a money suit against Kandra Manjhi and got a decree. To pay the decretal amount, Kandra sold about 12 bighas of his best lands to Krishna Patial under a private deed of sale. He has now got only 1½ bigah of land of the worst sort. He is now a day-labourer.

Dhanu Mohapatra.—This holding was taken out of *patit*.

Tara Chand Patra.—This holding formerly belonged to Surai Manjhi, who has left the village and gone to Mourbhanj. The sale was verbal. The purchaser was Surai's *mahajan*.

Nata Giri and others.—This holding consists of—(1) 2 bighas 17 cottahs 10 chittaks, which belonged to Nata Giri before 1291; (2) 9 cottahs 10 chittaks purchased from Tipoo Manjhi, and (3) 2 bighas 11 cottahs 14 chittaks taken from *patit*. Tipoo Manjhi is dead. His sons have got a big holding in the village.

Rama Chandra Raut and others.—This holding formerly belonged to Arjoon Manjhi, who used to take loans of paddy from Ram Chandra Raut and others in liquidation of which

Arjoon Manjhi had to sell 7 bighas out of his *jote*. This was a verbal sale. No document was executed. Arjoon's son has still got a big *jote* in the village.

Shib Prosad Mohakur and others —These were *mahajans* of Ananda Manjhi. He had to sell his entire holding in liquidation of his debts Ananda Manjhi is now dead without heirs.

There are no other non-aboriginal holdings in the village

GOPIBALLABHPUR THANA.

MAHALS KHELABGRAM AND NAYAGRAM

XXXV.—Panchgachia Broken —This is the village in which the Parganait of one of the collection circles of the Nawab of Murshidabad, the proprietor of the Nayagram pargana, dwells The Parganait is both the Manjhi and the Naik of the village The Paranick and Jog-Manjhi are the same as the Gurait There is no Jog-Paranick or Kudam-Naiki

Jagarnath Hermon sold his lands, 3 bighas, to a *gwala* (a cultivator), and not a *mahajan* and went to another village

Lobo Mandi lost his lands six or seven years ago when a minor, because there were arrears of rent It was presumably sold up for rent

Burhan Turu agreed to a transfer of his land to another Sonthal, because he could not pay the rent. He is the Parganait and has no land now.

Bhungu has got 11 bighas 7 cottahs on a rental of Rs 16-4-10 He has no debts at present

Daila cultivates 22 bighas odd on a rental of Rs 8-5. He has no debts, and has lost no land

Lakhi cultivates about 6 bighas on a rental of Rs. 2 4-5 He has no debts.

Gangu cultivates no land in this village He has no debts

Lukun has no land His father fled, because he could not pay the rent, and the land went to a Puran (Bhuniya).

Gunda never had any land

Naran never had any land

Kandu never had any land

Gopi has land in another village, 7 bighas 17 cottahs on a rental of Rs 3-11-5 He mortgaged 19 cottahs, to a Bahora, without executing any document, on account of money taken for arrears of rent He has a debt of two aras. He also owes the Nawab 12 kuris of grain, at a rate of 25 per cent.

Pitho never had any land He is a labourer

XXXVI —Saningui Broken —The Manjhi and Naiki are one and the same. The Jog-Manjhi and the Paranick are also the same There is no Kudan-Naiki or Jog-Paranick The village was broken at the time all the villages were made *khas* in the pargana by the Nawab of Murshidabad. Originally there were Purans in the village, they left it and the Sonthals came in There are now 20 houses of Sonthals

1. Shamu originally had 29 bighas Six bighas went many years ago Ten bighas were transferred by way of a usufructuary mortgage to a *mahajan*, who sold the land to some-one else There is now a dispute as to possession of the land His debts are four aras of grain due to two Kurmi Mahtos, they held his receipts as security for repayment

2 Konda's rent-receipts shows the following —

	Rs.	A	G
Jal (rice land) 11 bighas 8 cottahs—			
Rent .. .	5	15	15
Wood	0	6	0
Cess . ..	0	3	10
Dahi (uplands) 1 bigha 11 cottahs—			
Rent .. .	1	11	0
Phalkar	0	3	15
Cess	0	0	15

He has lost no land. He has mortgaged (usufructuary) 3 bighas of his land for a period of six years

3. Sarau Saren —One of his rent-receipts contains an entry of 2 annas for wood (*bankar*) on which cess is charged 5 gundas He cultivates 5 bighas 13 cottahs of dahi land at Rs 3-12, has no debts, except a usufructuary mortgage of 2 bighas

4. Karia sold 4 bighas for Rs 98 to two different *mahajans* He gave a simple mortgage of 7 bighas of *dahi* land last year to a *mahajan* for Rs. 56 at annas 8 in the rupee interest. He owes 1 ara 4 kuris to one Bulai Mahto. He also owes 3 aras to another *mahajan* Other recent debts were repaid with his crop this year. Cultivates altogether 12 bighas 14 cottahs of *jal* land, and 7 bighas 10 cottahs of *dahi* land

5 Bundu cultivates 14 bighas 18 cottahs of *jal* land at Rs 7-15-5, and 3 cottahs of *dahi* land at As 1-15. He gave a usufructuary mortgage for the interest alone of Rs. 100 two years ago, on account of the scarcity He intends to repay the principal by selling to another *mahajan* half of the land mortgaged. He owes also 4 aras at 50 per cent interest

6 Mohan has got 6 bighas odd at a rental of Rs. 3-15-10. He has no debts.

7. Dibiu has 11 bighas 4 cottahs at a rental of Rs 5-3-5. He owes 17 kuris to two different *mahajans*, at 50 per cent. interest. His rent-receipts show the following:—

Area				Rent.		
				Rs.	A.	P.
11 bighas 4 cottahs	..	...	...	5	3	5
Phalkar (*mahua*)	...	...	...	0	7	10
Wood		...	..	0	6	0
Cess ..	..	...	...	0	3	5
		Total	...	6	4	0

Road cess is charged in phalkar, in this case on *mahua* trees He is just about to execute a usufructuary mortgage for 3 bighas, in order to pay off 3 aras due to other *mahajans*

8. Mangal has got 1 bigha 13 cottahs He owes 1 ara at 50 per cent interest; also Rs 7 taken in 1907 for a marriage at 50 per cent, of which Rs 2 has been repaid.

9. Durga never had any land He has no debts . He cultivates *bhagti* and labours

10 Laihu has no land His father sold all his land to a *mahajan*, and they fled from the village He returned Now he works for one Dasrath Mahto in the village as a servant.

11 Dubraj never had any land He also labours for Dasrath Mahto

The other villagers had all gone off to labour in the jungles for many days It was said that they had no land, and never had any

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APPENDIX I(d)

DISTRICT BALASORE

Jellasore Thana

I—Haladgundi Intact—Kamla Murmu is the *ijaradar* of this village It is a temporary right. The rent is Rs 11-8 and cess 8 annas. The *ijaradar* has got *man* land consisting of 6 bighas and one *bati* (20 bighas) of uplands

Rents were fixed about 20 years ago The rent of the village is divided as follows.—

				Rs.	A
Barsa Manjhi		...	...	5	0
Dor Potar	.	...		4	0
Madheb Nandi	..	.	.	2	0
Barju Sahu	..	..	.	1	8
		Total		12	8

Taking the rents as an indication of the amount of dispossession, areas not being available, five eighths of the value of the cultivation of the village has gone out of the hands of the Sonthal into those of small *mahajans*

Name of Sonthal	Rent	Land lost	Remarks	Debts			Remarks
				Unsecured	Secured	Security	
	Rs A						
Kamla	11 8*	Unknown	Land lost. Rental at Rs. 1-8 Transferred to Baiju Sahu, because rent could not be paid	—	10 pantis.	5 bighas	Usufructuary mortgage for interest alone, cultivated by Sonthal *bhagti*
Barsa	5 0	10 bighas	Civil Court decree after a mortgage to Madhab Nandi for debts		38 „	8 „	Usufructuary mortgage for interest only 1 anna a rupee a month
Samu —		—	No land, except homestead, not rented		10 kuris.		50 per cent.
Anta, Kanu, Leda, Pakhu, Gora		.	Labourers absent labouring have no land and never had any				
Sama Harmu (died)	4 0	All	Sold to Dor Patar on account of debt for money for the price of bullocks	—	—	—	—
Gora Harma (fled).	2 0	.	Sold to Madhab Nandi Mahajan			—	—

* Total rent.

II.—Maturgora Intact.—Bara Hemrom is the *ijaradar* of this village. He has a *patta* of it, period seven years. His profit consists of 4 bighas of *man* lands. The Naiki has also got *man* land. He collects rent from two Dikkus, as well as the seven other Sonthal houses in the village. Land is poor; about 100 bighas are all. The total rent fixed by the ijaradar is Rs. 46, and cess Rs. 2-14.

Name of Sonthal.	Rent	Land lost	Remarks.	Debts			Remarks.
				Unsecured	Secured	Security	
	Rs. A.						
Bara Hemron	1 10	8 bighas ...	Sale for debts.	5 kuris			50 per cent
Singhrai	4 8			Rs 6			Interest not fixed
Chota Phatu	1 4	Unknown	...	„ 10 ...		...	12 pice a month (for marriage expenses)
Jiram	6 8	...			1 ara	All his land	Original debt. Usufructuary mortgage of all his land for the interest alone
Lebgrai	6 0			1 ara		..	37½ per cent
							2 pice in the month 1
Chota Daka	4 0		...	Rs 2			No debts.
Dunga	6 0						Absent
Paso	1 8					.	Do
Dasmut ...	1 8						
Kanta	2 0			8 kuris			37½ per cent
Chota Kanta	2 0		...				No debts
Batku		4 bighas	Abandoned, because it was poor land				
Total rent .	35 14						
Dikku's rent	11 0						
	46 14						

Rent Rs. 46 and cess Rs. 3-1

III.—Karragoria Intact.—The present headman is the great-grandson of the original clearer of the soil.

Reports by Maulvi Ekramuddin

Serial No	Name of Sonthal	Amount of land now held	Amount of land lost.	Amount of land given as usufructuary mortgage	Remarks	Debt			Remarks
						Unsecured	Secured	Security	
		Bighas.	Bighas	Bighas				Bighas	
1	Doma ...								
2	Bhaga								
3	Chaitan	20		...	...		...		
4	Damu								
5	Chharu ...								
6	Mansing								
7	Meghua								
8	Bhaju	3	8	..	Sold to money-lender				
9	Rabai								
10	Muchia ...								
11	Biram								
12	Salku								
13	Hinga	1	6		Ditto				
14	Karu								
15	Ramji								
16	Bhonda	6	1½	2	Sold for debts		4 pautis of paddy	2	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest.
17	Mangia								
							3 aras of paddy	3	Simple mortgage 2 aras, 4 kuris re-paid 3 aras 12 kuris still due Interest 37 5 per cen
18	Karam		8		Arbitrarily settled with another by a minor head man s *gomashta*				
19	Doma								
20	Madan ...	7	12		Sold in auction for debts		......		
21	Chhoku ..	6½	3	2½	Sold to money-lender for debts		3 pautis of paddy	2½	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
22	Mathan								
23	Rama ...	...	8		Appropriated by a lessee to whom the land had been sub-leased.	..	Rs 32	4	Simple mortgage Amount of 1 loan taken 5 years ago Re paid Rs 36 Rs 56 still due Interest 37 5 per cent.
24	Jayram								
							3 aras of paddy	3	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
25	Palku								
26	Mongla	7			...	..			
27	Bara								
28	Kala	5		1	—	..	1 ara of paddy.	1	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
29	Lakhna	1	...	...		...	.		

IV.—Kendkhunta. Old, but broken.—The present headman is the great-grandson of the original clearer of the soil. The zamindars increased the rent of the raiyats in 1305 B.S., by having the lands measured by their own *amins*.

Serial No	Name of Sonthal	Amount of land originally held	Original rent.	Amount of land now held	Present rent	Amount of land lost	Amount of land given as usufructuary mortgage	Remarks	Debts.			Remarks
									Unsecured	Secured	Security	
		B C CH	B C CH	B C CH	B C CH	B C CH	Rs A				Bighas.	
1	Thakura	13 0 0	4 9 9	13 0 0	5 15 3		13 0		--	Rs 54 " 100 5 pautis of paddy	8 5 5	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest Usufructuary simple mortgage for the same land for which usufructuary mortgage has been given. Amount of loan taken a year ago, none re-paid. Interest 50 per cent
2	Sido	4 17 9	2 0 3	4 17 9	2 5 4½					6 pautis of paddy 2 pautis of paddy	4 2	Simple mortgage Amount of loan taken 5 years ago None re-paid Interest 25 per cent Thirteen and half pautis now due Simple mortgage Interest 50 per cent
3 4 5 6	Kharuo Lusa Sitaram No 1 Sitaram No 2	41 7 3	6 0 0	47 7 3	9 9 9	-	—	--	--			
7	Dukhia	6 10 0	3 0 0	0 15 8	0 5 4½	3 14 8 2 0 0	--	Sold to Naib for debts Forcibly dispossessed by Naib	5 aras, 8 kuris of paddy	-- --		Interest 25 per c…
8 9 10	Buran No 1 Sitaram No 3 Knatu	7 0 0	2 12 0		-- --	3 0 0 2 0 0 2 0 0		Sold to money lender for debts. Sold for consideration	-	-		
11	Ponda ...	5 8 9	-	5 8 9	0 11 10½	----		Originally paid no rent for the land enjoyed as *man*, or service land of an office-bearer				
12 13	Buran No 2 Pachin No 1		—	0 15 12	0 6 7½	--						
14 15 16 17	Doman Pachin No 2 Raju .. Rakhal	11 13 6	5 2 0	11 13 6	5 15 0	----	4 0			Rs 40	4	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest.
18 19 20	Bhim Thoti Knaurey Andu	5 0 0	Not known		-- --	5 0 0	—	Sold to landlady's brother for debts	-- --			
21	Dubal	2 5 9	1 0 0			2 5 9		Sold for debts			—	
22	Lakhia Barra	4 0 0	2 0 0			4 0 0		Ditto		—	-	
23	Ramo	3 17 8	2 0 6	1 7 8	0 8 3	2 10 0	—	Sold to money lender for debts				
24	Labho ..	10 1 12	9 0 7½	11 1 12	4 8 0	3 0 0 2 0 0	2 0	Sold for consideration Sold for debts	1 pauti, 15 kuris of paddy.	13 pautis of paddy.	2	Verbal usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest Interest 25 per cent
25	Rupa	2 0 0	1 0 0		--	2 0 0		Ditto				
26 27	Majho Duma ..	4 0 0	1 8 1½	-- --	----	4 0 0		-- --	—			
28	Toula		—	--		—	...	-- --	2½ pautis of paddy	5 pautis of paddy	2	Simple mortgage Six pautis re-paid Half of the principal still due Interest 50 per cent Interest 50 per cent Interest 25 per cent
29	Mora ...	13 14 3	5 0 0	13 14 3	6 12 6		2 10	-- --	4 aras of paddy	5 aras of paddy	2½	Verbal usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest
30	Konka	9 13 12	5 4 0	5 13 12	5 8 9	4 0 0	3 0	Sold to money lender for debts	3 aras, 6 kuris of paddy	Rs 40 + 7 pautis of paddy 4 pautis of paddy.	3 4	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest Simple mortgage Five pautis, 6 kuris re-paid One pauti still due Interest 50 per cent. Interest 2' per cent
31 32	Khudu Dharma	6 0 5 15 9 14	2 8 0 6 3 0	6 0 5 10 9 14	3 0 1½ 4 10 4½	5 0 0	3 0	Sold for debts	12½ aras of paddy	Rs. 24 ..	3	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest. Interest 50 per cent
33	Amta	6 13 3	4 0 0	6 3 3	4 3 9	0 10 0	3 0	Forcibly dispossessed by landlady's cook	11 aras, 11 kuris of paddy 13 aras of paddy	10 aras of paddy	3	Usufructuary mortgage in lieu of interest. Interest 50 per cent " 25 "
34 35 36 37	Bara No 1 Bula ... Pi Kulu	13 16 1	7 8 0	13 16 1	8 3 6	--	--- --		----	-	-- -- --	
38	Diba ...	20 16 3	6 4 0	20 16 3	10 13 3		--		5 pautis of paddy.	-- --		Interest 50 per cent.
39	Hala	5 1 5	1 4 3	5 1 5	2 5 7½	--	--		--		--	
40	Raghu	8 8 2	3 6 0	8 8 2	4 6 8					----	--	
35	Bara No. 2	8 12 8	8 13 0	1 0 0	0 6 0	7 13 8		Sold to money-lender for debts.		---		

Two sorts of measures prevail in the locality. Where the majority of the money-lenders live—

4	srs	...	...	...	=1 man.
2	mâns	..	...	.	... =1 kuri or gauni
16	kuris or gaunis ...	...	...	.	=1 ara.
20	ditto	.	...		=1 pauti.
	In other villages 3 srs	...	...	..	=1 mân
4	mâns	...	...	...	=1 kuri or gauni
16	kuris or gaunis ...	.	...	.	=1 ara.
20	ditto	..	..	.	=1 pauti

The amount of land shown in columns 3, 5, 7, 8 and 12 is only cultivated land, and the amount of rent shewn in columns 5 and 6 is for these cultivated lands only The figures have been taken from the zamindar's papers.

The Naib took possession of 2 bighas of land, on the raiyats failure to pay a fine of Rs. 20 imposed upon his mother for making the Naib's wife ill by witchcraft I interrogated the Naib He could not deny the fact

Maulvi Ekramuddin interrogated the Manager. He said that the dispossession took place without his knowledge. He told the Sonthal that the land would be returned to him.

APPENDIX II(*a*).

Statements showing the deeds executed by the Sonthals of the Birbhum District during the years 1906 and 1907

MORTGAGES

YEAR	Total number of mortgages registered during the year.	Number in which the rate of interest was Rs. 24 per cent per annum	Number in which the rate of interest was varying from over Rs. 21 to Rs 37-8	Number in which the rate of interest was over Rs 37-8
1906...	Simple, 70 ... Usufructuary, 9 ...	18	45	7
1907...	Simple, 51 ... Usufructuary, 7 ..	11	37	3

SALES.

YEAR.	Total number of sales registered during the year	Number in which the rate of price was up to Rs. 10 per bigha.	Number in which the rate of price was ranging from Rs 10 to Rs 20 per bigha	Number in which the rate was above Rs 20 per bigha
1906 ...	75	21	40	14
1907 ...	54	19	28	7

LEASES (*Kabuliyats*).

YEAR.	Total number of leases registered during the year.	Number in which the rate of rent was Rs. 2 per bigha.	Number in which the rate of rent was from Rs. 2 to Rs 3 per bigha	Number in which the rate of rent was over Rs 3 per bigha
1906 ...	35	19	11	5
1907 .	30	16	10	4

APPENDIX II (b).

Statements showing the deeds executed by the Sonthals of the Bankura District during the years 1906 and 1907

Mortgages.

Year.	Total number of mortgages registered by Sonthals during the year.	Number in which the rate of interest was 24 per cent. per annum	Number in which the rate of interest was above Rs 24, but not exceeding Rs. 37-8	Number in which the rate of interest was over Rs. 37-8
1906 ..	Simple, 147 ...	51	78	18
	Usufructuary, 27	2	25	.
1907. .	Simple, 186 ...	55	107	24
	Usufructuary, 15 ...	12	...	3

Sales.

Year.	Total number of sales of land by Sonthals during the year.	Number in which the price was above Rs 10 or below per bigha.	Number in which the price was above Rs. 10, and not exceeding Rs. 20	Number in which the price was over Rs 20
1906	137	63	25	49
1907	154	55	37	62

Leases (*Kaouliyats*)

Year	Total number of such kabuliyats registered by Sonthals during the year.	Number in which the rate of rent was Rs 2 per bigha or less.	Number in which the rate of rent was over Rs 2, but not exceeding Rs. 3, per bigha.	Number in which the rate of rent was over Rs 3.
1906	190	102	27	61
1907	287	196	21	70

APPENDIX II (c).

Statement showing the deeds executed by the Sonthals of District Midnapore during the years 1906 and 1907

Mortgages.

Year.	Total number of mortgages registered by the Sonthals during the year.	Number in which the rate of interest was 24 per cent per annum.	Number in which the rate of interest was above Rs. 24, but not exceeding Rs. 37-8.	Number in which the fate of interest was above Rs. 37-8.
1906	Simple ... 226 Usufructuary... 17	11	137	95
1907	Simple 191 Usufructuary . 24	23	131	61

SALES

Year.	Total number of sale of land by Sonthals during the year.	Number in which the price was Rs. 10, or below per bigha	Number in which the price was above Rs 10 but not exceeding Rs 20	Number in which the price was over Rs. 20.
1906	332	132	132	68
1907	200	73	64	63

LEASES (*Kabuliyats*)

YEAR	Total number of such kabuliyats registered by the Sonthals during the year	Number in which the rate of rent was Rs 2 per bigha or less	Number in which the rate of rent was over Rs 2, but not exceeding Rs 3 per bigha.	Number in which the rate of rent was over Rs 3
1906	329	146	35	148
1907	260	109	23	128

APPENDIX III(*a*)*

Statements showing the number of suits instituted against the Sonthals and disposed of during the years 1906 and 1907 in Birbhum.

INSTITUTED

Class of Suits.		1906	1907
Suits for money under Small Cause Court procedure		54	35
Do. under ordinary procedure	.	3	5
Do for ejectment under Rent Law		...	1
Other suits ditto ..	...	55	39
Suits for possession	.	4	6
Other title suits . .	...	28	6
Total	...	144	92

DISPOSED OF

Year	CLASS OF SUITS	Transferred to other courts	Dismissed for default	Withdrawn with leave	Decreed on confession	Decreed on compromise.	Dismissed on satisfaction	Decreed *ex-parte*	Decreed after contest	Dismissed after contest	TOTAL
1906	Sce money suits ...		4	2	7	5	1	35	–		53
	Sce under ordinary procedure	–				2		1			3
	Rent suits other than for ejectment		6	3	1	3	1	30	6	1	51
	Suits for possession		1			1		1	1		4
	Other title suits	–	6		3	4	1	10	4	..	28
	Total		17	5	11	15	2	77	11	1	139
1907	Sce money suits	1	4			2		20	6	2	35
	Sce under ordinary procedure	..	..					3	2		5
	Rent suits other than for ejectment	3	2			1	–	27	6		39
	Suits for possession ...		..			3	1		2		6
	Other title suits				1	1		3	4	.	9
	Suits for ejectment under Rent Law							1			1
	Total	4	6		1	7	1	64	20	2	95

Statements showing the number of Suits instituted against the Sadgops, and disposed of during the years 1906 and 1907 in Rampur Hât Subdivision (Birbhum)

INSTITUTED.

Class of Suits.		1906.	1907.
Suits for money under Small Cause Court's procedure		89	23
Do under ordinary procedure .	...	42	45
Do. for ejectment under Rent Law ...		..	..
Other suits ditto ...	.	164	219
Suits for possession	.	23	35
Other title suits	.	62	89
Total	...	380	411

* The figures in this appendix must be revised with caution

Disposed of.

Year	Class of Suits.	Transferred to other courts.	Dismissed for default	Withdrawn with leave	Decreed on confession	Decreed on compromise.	Dismissed on satisfaction	Decreed ex-parte	Decreed after contest.	Dismissed after contest	Total
1906	See money suits ..		14	2	1	8	1	51	10	2	89
	See under ordinary procedure		2		1	9		31	10		43
	Suits other than for ejectment		9	4	4	15	8	165	19		166
	Suits for confession		1			6	8	10	1		31
	Other title suits				5	16	2	27	10		60
	Total		29	6	1.	54	14	214	50	2	377
1907	See money suits	3	5	1	4	4	1	5	..		23
	" under ordinary procedure			2	2		4	26	11		45
	Rent suits, other than for ejectment		9	6	5	32	11	124	32		
	Suits for possession		1		2	13	1	7	11		5
	Other title suits		1	1		19	7	46	9		83
	Total	3	16	10	13	68	24	208	63		405

Statement showing the numbers of Execution Sales in cases against Sonthals and Sadgops

Year	Class of Suits.	Cases against Sonthals (Birbhum) Number.	Numbers ending in sale of right, title and interest of the Sonthal.	Cases against Sadgops (Rampurhât Subdivision.) Number.	Numbers ending in sale of right, title and interest of the Sadgops.
1906	Money suits .	56	8	132	8
"	Rent suits ..	51	19	164	12
"	Title and other suits	32	6	81	7
	Total ..	139	33	377	27
1907	Money suits ...	40	3	68	7
"	Rent suits ..	40	17	219	22
"	Title and other suits	15	3	118	12
	Total ...	95	23	405	41
	Average number of sales per 100 cases.	...	24	...	9

APPENDIX III(b).

Statement showing Suits instituted against Sonthals, and number of Sales in the District of Bankura for the years 1906 and 1907.

Year.	(a) Total number of suits for possession or ejectments and suits, civil or rent, brought against the Sonthals during the year	(b) In how many of these suits or execution sales the right, title and interest of Sonthals or their holdings have been sold	(c) Total number of suits that were decreed *ex-parte*
1906 ..	177	22	57
1907 ...	173	25	50
	Average number of sales per 100 cases.	13	...

Statement showing the number of Suits instituted, etc., against the Bhumijes during the years 1906 and 1907 in the Court of the Munsiff of Khatra.

Year	Total number of suits for possession or ejectments instituted.	Total number of civil or rent suits.	Total suits.	In how many of these suits or execution sales the right, title and interest of the Bhumijes or their holdings have been sold	The total number of suits decreed *ex-parte*.
1906 ...	1	Civil ... 6 Rent .. 12	19	2	9
1907 ...	...	Civil ... 7 Rent ... 18	25	......	6
Average number of sales per 100 cases	...	...	...	4	.

Statement showing the number of Suits instituted, etc., against the Bauris during the years 1906 and 1907 in the Court of the Munsiff of Khatra.

Year.	Total number of suits for possession or ejectments instituted.	Total number of civil and rent suits.	Total suits.	In how many of these suits or execution sales the right, title and interest of the Bauris or their holdings have been sold.	The total number of suits decreed *ex-parte*.
1906 ...	1	Civil... 20 Rent... 23	44	8	23
1907 ...	1	Civil ... 35 Rent .. 27	73	6	21
Average number of sales per 100 cases.	...	...	...	11	...

APPENDIX III (c).

Statements showing the number of Suits instituted against different Castes or Tribes, and disposed of, etc, during the years 1906 and 1907 in the portion of the District of Midnapore called the Jungle Mahals.

INSTITUTED

Class of suits		Sonthals		Bhumijes		Kurmis	
		1906	1907.	1906	1907	1906	1907
Suits for money ...	Under S. C. C power	24	19	...	.	12	7
	Under ordinary procedure.	4	2	...	...	3	5
Suits under Rent Law	Suits for rent ...	91	200	39	41	99	380
	Suits for ejectment .	..	..		...	.	...
Title and other suits	Suits for ejectment or possession	11	22	2	1	3	15
	Other suits . .	21	24	12	3	15	32
	Total	151	267	53	45	132	439

DISPOSED OF

Cases against.	Year	Transferred to other courts.	Dismissed for default	Withdrawn with leave	Decreed on confession.	Decreed on compromise.	Dismissed on satisfaction	Decreed exparte	Decreed after contest.	Dismissed on contest.	Total
Sonthals ...	1906		15	0	2	37	6	51	30	1	151
	1907	4	14	10		65	6	97	69	2	267
Total ...	..	4	29	10	2	102	12	148	99	3	418
Bhumijes	1906		3	3	1	8	3	25	10		53
	1907	1	2	1	1	11	2	24	3	..	45
Total		1	5	4	2	19	5	49	13	..	98
Kurmis	1906 ..		15	16	4	29		37	21	..	132
	1907	7	27	17	6	61	9	226	96		439
Total	...	7	42	33	10	90	9	263	117	..	571

Statement showing numbers of Execution Sales.

Year.	Number of suits against Sonthals.	Number in which right, title and interest of Sonthal has been sold	Number of suits against Bhumijes.	Number in which right, title and interest of Bhumijes has been sold.	Number of suits against Kurmis.	Number in which right, title and interest of Kurmis has been sold.
1906 ...	151	14	53	.....	132	6
1907 ...	267	17	45	3	439	6
Total ...	418	31	98	3	571	12
Average number of sales per 100 cases.	...	7	...	3	...	2

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